■ **Entertainment / A2-3**

'Idol' finalist Amanda Avila may have Filipino roots

■ **Lifestyle / D4**

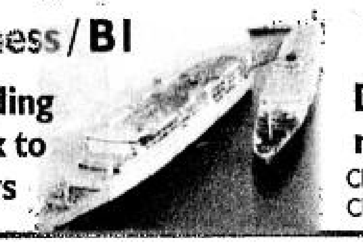
Vandalism as art

■ **News / A2**

4th Makati bus bombing suspect nabbed in South

■ **Business / B1**

Shipbuilding sails back to glory days



Tanong ng Bayan / A27

Dapat bang mag-retiro na ang Santo Papa?

CELLCARD KADA ARAW,
CELLPHONE KADA LINGGO! Text 2910 now!

Malaysia crackdown creates labor shortfall

PAREHO TULOY TAYONG NAHIHIRAPAN!

KUALA LUMPUR—Talk of self-flagellation.

A crackdown that forced tens of thousands of illegal workers—mostly Indonesians but also including Filipinos—out of Malaysia has created a

MALAYSIA/ A22

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PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Monday, March 7, 2005 ★★ 76 pages 7 sections Vol. 20 No. 89 P18

Only 16% of Pinoy moms breast-feed, study shows

By Christian V. Esguerra

ONLY 16 percent of Filipino mothers breast-feed their babies in the first six months from birth, according to the World Health Organization, citing a recent study by the National Demographic Health Survey.

The majority of mothers give their new-

ONLY/ A22

website: www.inq7.net

Log ban lifted in 3 areas

Asia women leaders mask continued inequality

HONG KONG—In the 21st century world, the number of national leaders who are women remains extremely small, but with four female presidents and prime ministers currently in office in Asia appears to be doing more than most regions for gender equality.

This picture of political power, however, is misleading since it does not so much reflect increasing female empowerment and grassroots representation as it does the region's enthrallment with dynastic politics, analysts and activists say.

While strides have been made in female political involvement since the first International Women's Day 30 years ago, the lesser-represented sex remains heavily in the minority in parliaments across Asia, recent figures show.

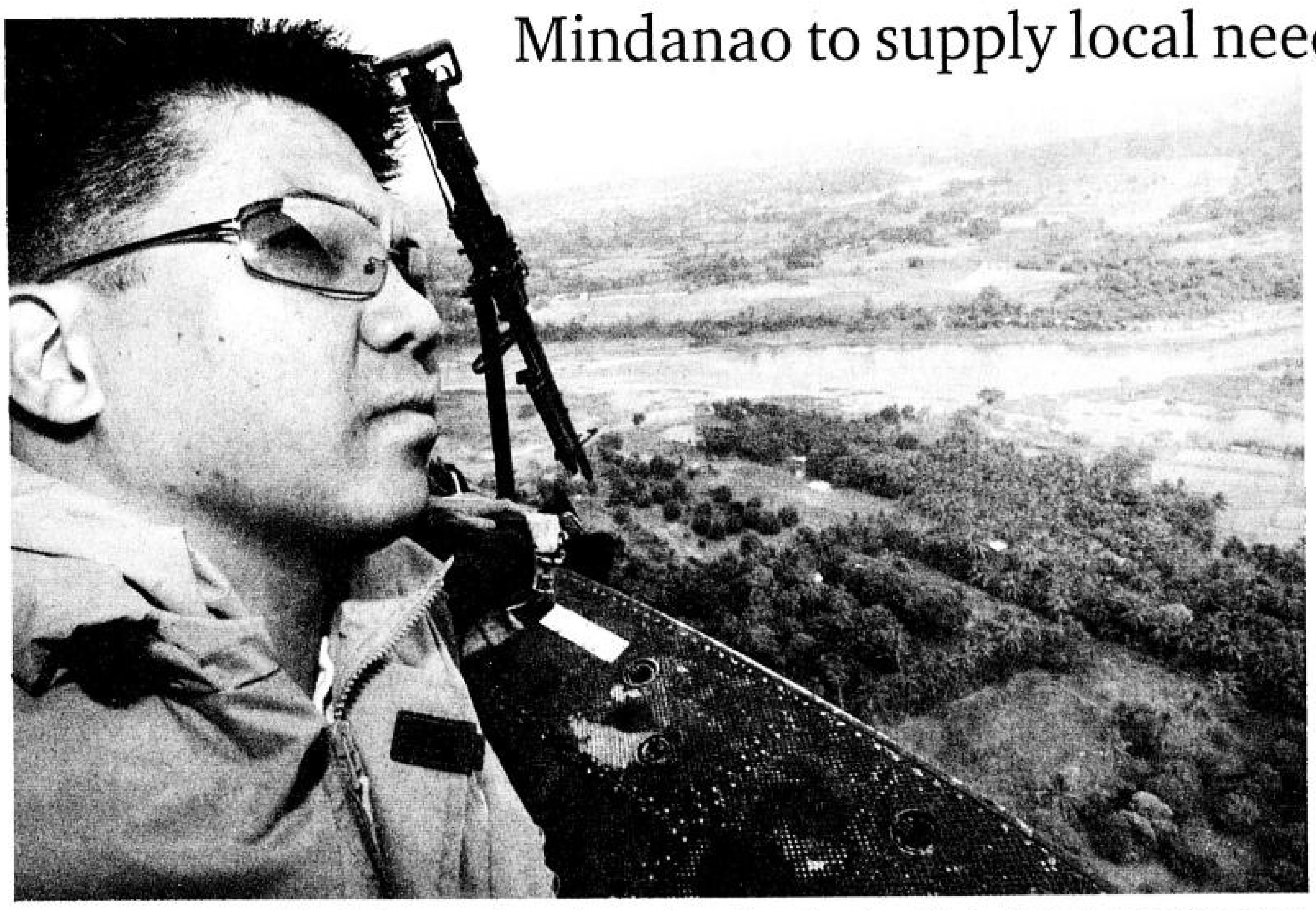
Asia has four women leaders—Prime Minister Helen Clark of New Zealand, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines, President Chandrika Kumaratunga of Sri Lanka and Prime Minister Khalida Zia of Bangladesh.

Until last October, Megawati Sukarnoputri was Indonesian president. India last year elected Sonia Gandhi's Congress Party into power, although she declined the premiership.

Pakistan, too, has had a female prime minister in the not too distant past, while in the cases of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and New Zealand the current leaders are not

ASIA/ A22

Mindanao to supply local needs for wood



ENVIRONMENT Secretary Michael Defensor supervises seeding operations on denuded portions of the Angat watershed on board a military helicopter.

ROMEO GACAD/AFP

By Blanche S. Rivera and Philip C. Tubeza

LOGGING operations in the country will resume in three regions this week.

Environment Secretary Michael Defensor said he planned to issue today a department order lifting the suspension of logging in the Davao, Caraga and Zamboanga areas.

He said the total log ban would be lifted in Regions 9 and 11, and in Caraga to meet the country's local wood requirement of 3 million cubic meters a year.

Region 9 (Zamboanga Peninsula) comprises the provinces of Zamboanga Sibugay, Zamboanga del Norte and Zamboang del Sur; Region 11 (Davao) consists of Davao Oriental, Compostela Valley, Davao del Sur and Davao del Norte, and Caraga is made up of Agusan del Norte, Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Sur and Surigao del Norte.

The total log ban will continue to be in effect in the 14 other regions of the country.

"These (legal logging areas) will all be in Mindanao, no more in Luzon and the Visayas ... The logging areas would be open soon. We will designate where the operators can work," Defensor said during a meeting with INQUIRER editors Thursday.

The order comes three months after President Macapagal-Arroyo stopped all logging operations in the country following the flash floods and landslides that killed hundreds of people in eastern Luzon, mostly in Aurora and Quezon provinces. The landslides were blamed on logging in the Sierra Madre, the country's longest mountain range.

Defensor said the government could no longer maintain the total log ban imposed last Dec. 8 because the law provides for selective logging in the Philippines.

Anticipating criticism from some politicians and groups, he said: "They're going to sue us if we insist on a total log ban so we came up with this arrangement. If the lawmakers want a total log ban, then they must first amend the law."

He said the Department of Environment and Natural Resources chose to allow logging in the three regions because they enjoyed constant rainfall, which helps in the natural growth of forests.

"Secondly, the people there are aware of the need for the sustainability of the forest because that is their livelihood. They know how to guard the forest," the secretary said.

Mindanao has only about 20 logging concessionaires, but these are big companies, according to Defensor.

LOG BAN/ A20

Congress casualty of intra-chamber squabbling

By Amando Doronila

ANALYSIS

THE SENATE-HOUSE imbroglio that followed the passage of the 2005 national budget reveals the deep-seated mentality in Congress that the main reason for its existence under the democratic system of checks and balances is to be contentious.

Members of Congress have initiated over the past years a number of actions that sought to check abuses by the executive (the most significant of which was the impeachment of former President Joseph Estrada) and even by the third coequal branch, the Supreme Court, the most passive among the three.

In those actions, the most potent weapon of Congress has been impeachment, which its members trivialized and abused when they attempted to impeach Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. before the May 2004 elections.

Although the attempt failed, Congress has become so addicted to the habit of demonstrating its power to checkmate, especially the executive, that it is now turning this weapon on itself.

In the passage of the P907.56-billion budget, Congress is at war with itself and, for a change, President Macapagal-Arroyo has escaped the scathing fire from either the House or the Senate.

CONGRESS/ A6

HUNDREDS of residents of Panamao town in Sulu, who have been displaced by recent clashes in the province, line up to receive relief goods as part of the rehabilitation program of the Department of Social Welfare and Development.

REM ZAMORA

Sulu group says gov't rehab plan a face-lift

By Julie S. Alipala
PDI Mindanao Bureau

JOLO, Sulu—President Macapagal-Arroyo's peace adviser called it a massive effort to rebuild Jolo from the ashes of war.

But members of civil society likened it to a facelift for a patient suffering from an advanced case of cancer.

Speaking to local officials during a visit here on Saturday, presidential adviser Teresita Deles said the government would pour millions of pesos into Jolo to rebuild roads and houses in villages affected by the fighting between the military and Moro guerrillas.

"We are going to start massive rehabilitation efforts in Jolo. We are going to repair roads and build schools and mosques and other things needed by the people," Deles said in transcripts released yesterday.

"The soldiers from the engineering brigade are now here and they are inspecting many areas where fighting broke out and we hope to start very soon," she said.

Deles gave emphasis on the food-for-work program and livelihood projects included in the rebuilding plan.

"We are here to mark the acceleration of rehabilitation and development," she said.

Sulu Gov. Benjamin Loong has proposed a P23-million rehabilitation program for the barangays devastated by recent military operations.

But Warina Sushil-Jukuy, a co-

SULU/ A22

Survivor helps mark legacy of WWII veterans

By Volt Contreras

A BOWL of *lugaw* (porridge) that seemed to get lighter by the day. The morning and evening roll calls in the corridors. The need to bow before Japanese sentries. The crackle of distant gunfire. The burning night sky over Manila.

These are a little girl's memories of World War II.

Leslie Ann Murray was just a little girl when Japanese troops detained her American family and hundreds of other foreigners on the University of Santo Tomas campus.

Now 65, Murray has made Manila her home for the last 43 years and has devoted a part of her life making sure that the stories and sacrifices of WWII veterans in the Philippines would never be lost to postwar generations.

She is the first vice president of the Filipino-American Memorial Endowment Inc. (FAME), which has been particularly active these days as the country commemorates the 60th anniversary of the end of the Pacific War.

In an interview last week, Murray couldn't help but air her frustration, particularly over the scant attention and respect given to the country's various war shrines.

Since 2000, FAME, an organization under the auspices of the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines, has been working on the restoration of the "Death March kilometer markers" from Bataan to Tarlac, she said.

The original markers—concrete obelisks 1.37 meters (4.5 feet) tall and numbering 130—were installed in the late '60s during the Marcos administration, in memory of the Filipino and American prisoners of war who were forced to walk for days by their

SURVIVOR/ A21

LESLIE Ann Murray: Former POW

VAL HANDUMON

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern Luzon, Visayas and Eastern Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers becoming frequent over Bicol region and Eastern Visayas. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers.
SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/03/07/05

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

4th Makati bombing suspect falls

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

A FOURTH suspect in the deadly Valentine's Day bombing in Makati City has been arrested, the military announced yesterday.

Rahib Buday, 49, was collared by military intelligence operatives at his home in Barangay Layog, Pagalungan, Maguindanao, at around 11 p.m. Friday.

Buday was also reportedly a suspect in the bombing of SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City on May 21, 2000, that killed one person and injured 12.

A statement issued by Army spokesperson Maj. Bartolome Bacarro said Buday did not resist arrest when members of Military Intelligence Group-Region 12 and the 40th Infantry Battalion swooped down on his home.

Buday reportedly had an outstanding arrest warrant against him.

No other details were given on Buday's alleged participation in the Feb. 14 bombing of a passenger bus on Edsa that killed four people and wounded more than 100.

Bacarro could not be reached yesterday.

Maj. Gen. Raul Relano, commander of the 6th Infantry Division that took part in Buday's arrest, said they relied on information passed on by the Intelligence Service of the Armed Forces of the Philippines (Isafp).

"He (Buday) was involved in the bomb attacks according to the Isafp national office. We merely helped in the operation," Relano said.

Buday is reportedly in the custody of the 40th IB. "He will be turned over to the proper authorities," the Army statement said.

On Friday, the third suspect in the Makati bombing surrendered to local officials in Barangay Mambulu Nuevo, Libmanan, Camarines Sur.

Gappal Bannah, also known as Boy Negro, Kim Ted Santos and Maidan, said he supplied the TNT the bombers used to carry out the Makati attack.

Police intelligence officials said Bannah was an "ordinary Abu Sayyaf member" who was ordered to deliver the bomb to two men in Mandaluyong City.

The two, Gamal "Tapay" Baharan and Angelo Trinidad, alias Abu Khalil, were the first to be arrested after the bus bombing and have been charged with multiple counts of murder, frustrated murder and illegal possession of explosives.

Baharan and Trinidad were also believed to be members of the Abu Sayyaf, which claimed responsibility for the near simultaneous bomb attacks on Feb. 14 in Makati, Davao and General Santos cities that killed a total of 13 people and wounded scores of others.

Police said Bannah and another person, Jemar Astalik, who is in their custody, were also the ones who left a bag filled with explosives at a billiard hall in Taguig days after the Makati blast.

The police discovered the bag on Feb. 25.

In another development, a suspected member of the Abu Sayyaf who was allegedly involved in the celebrated Dos Palmas kidnapping in May 2001 was arrested on Friday.

Army spokesperson Bacarro said the suspect, Rasidin Mohammad, was arrested in Camp Land, Arena Blanco, by operatives of Task Force Zamboanga.

MANDATORY CONTINUING LEGAL EDUCATION (MCLE) FOR LAWYERS

March 12 & 19, 2005 and April 2 & 9, 2005

The Supreme Court of the Philippines mandates ALL LAWYERS to comply with the 36 credit unit requirement under *Bar Matter 850* as a requisite for continuing the practice of law. Failure to comply would mean being listed as a delinquent member of the IBP and will not be allowed to practice law. The first compliance period ended last December 31, 2004. Lawyers may avail of our 36-UNIT FULL COURSE SEMINAR which may be credited to either the first compliance period or the second compliance period.

Please check your chosen session		TIME	SUBJECT CLASSIFICATION/ CREDIT UNITS (CU)	SUBJECT/TOPIC	LECTURER
March 12, 2005	AM Session	8-10am	Legal Writing & Oral Advocacy (2 CU)	Legal Writing	Justice Hugo E. Gutierrez
		10:15-12:15pm	Trial & Pre-Trial Skills (2 CU)	Pre-Trial Skills: Civil & Criminal Cases	Justice Noel G. Tijam
	PM Session	1-3pm	Updates in Substantive & Procedural Laws (2 CU)	Updates in Criminal Law	Justice Diosdado M. Peralta
		3:15-6:15pm	Alternative Dispute Resolution (3 CU)	International & Domestic Arbitration	Dean Custodio O. Parlade
March 19, 2005	AM Session	8-10am	Updates in Substantive & Procedural Laws (2 CU)	Updates in Civil & Criminal Procedure	Justice Ruben T. Reyes
		10:15-12:15pm	Alternative Dispute Resolution (2 CU)	ADR in the Workplace	Dean Froilan M. Bacungan
	PM Session	1-3pm	MCLE-Prescribed Subject: Technology and the Law (2 CU)	Essentials of Forensic Ballistics, Questioned Documents & Fingerprinting	Justice Regalado E. Maambong
		3:15-6:15pm	Legal Ethics (3 CU)	New Rules on Notarial Practice & Updates in Legal Ethics	Justice Hector L. Hofileña
April 2, 2005	AM Session	8-10am	Oral Advocacy & Legal Writing (2 CU)	Oral Advocacy	Justice Magdangal M. De Leon
		10:15-12:15pm	Trial & Pre-Trial Skills (2 CU)	Trial Technique: The Art of Direct & Cross Examination	Justice Edilberto G. Sandoval
	PM Session	1-3pm	Updates in Substantive & Procedural Laws (2 CU)	Updates in Commercial Laws	Atty. Gafar E. Lutian
		3:15-6:15pm	Legal Ethics (3 CU)	The Lawyer's Pitfalls	Justice Hilarion L. Aquino
April 9, 2005	AM Session	8-10am	International Law (2 CU)	International Law & the Admission of Aliens	Atty. Ronaldo P. Ledesma
		10:15-12:15pm	MCLE-Prescribed Subject: Technology and the Law (2 CU)	Rules on Electronic Evidence	Atty. Ivan John E. Uy
	PM Session	1-3pm	MCLE-Prescribed Subject: Reforms in the Law (2 CU)	Reforms in the Dangerous Drugs Act	Justice Diosdado M. Peralta
		3:15-6:15pm	Updates in Substantive & Procedural Laws (3 CU)	Updates in Constitutional & Election Laws	Justice Regalado E. Maambong
Total Credit Units			36 CU		

Date/Day/Time: March 12 & 19, 2005 and April 2 & 9, 2005
Saturdays, from 8:00 AM to 6:15 PM

Inclusions: Meals (morning or afternoon snacks for half day sessions plus lunch for whole day sessions), Hand-outs, Certificate of Attendance & Certificate of Appreciation Seminar Bag/Kit, Free-flowing coffee and candies, FREE FREE Parking, Free Notarization of Compliance Report And Submission to the MCLE Office.

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Delay in gun purchase costing RP, says supplier

By Fe Zamora

THE GOVERNMENT is paying a heavy price for delaying the final approval of a contract to buy M249 Squad Automatic Weapon (Saw) light machineguns, or Minimis, agents of the Belgian gun manufacturer have claimed.

The delays have already cost the government about P50 million, according to Randy Limjoco, Philippine representative of Fabrique Nacional-Herstal (FNH).

Limjoco said the weakening of the US dollar against the euro meant that the P593.3 million contract price initially approved by the Armed Forces would now be able to buy only 1,543 Minimis, instead of the originally planned 1,739 units.

"And that is direct losses," Limjoco said in a recent interview.

Aside from the financial losses, the review ordered by Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz also violated Republic Act No. 9184, which stipulates that contracts already approved must be implemented within a prescribed period, Limjoco said.

The INQUIRER yesterday broke the story about the deal and allegations by a military source that there may have been an overprice in the contract for the Minimis.

Limjoco, denying any overprice, berated the INQUIRER for "twisting the facts" and "subverting the truth" about the contract.

"God will punish you severely for what you are doing. I feel sorry for you, sister. I will pray for you," Limjoco said in a text message to this reporter.

In previous text messages, Limjoco called Cruz names for ordering the review.

Earlier, in a letter to AFP chief for modernization program Maj. Gen. Rey Rivera, FNH regional sales director Tony Andrews complained that the delay caused by the review "now places FN Herstal in a most difficult and prejudicial position."

Andrews said FNH had already started production and that the guns were ready "for inspection, test and acceptance" at the FNH factory in Herstal.

The FNH in 2003 sold 402 Minimis to the AFP at $5,088.20 each, although the company sold the same weapons to the US military for $2,401.50 per, according to documents.

The difference of $2,687.70 each would make the Minimi one of the most expensive weapons in the AFP arsenal, according to a military officer.

Rivera and Limjoco said the Minimis sold to the AFP were more expensive because the deal included accessories, cleaning kits, freight and insurance charges, among others.

Limjoco defended the contract as advantageous to the AFP because it also included technology transfer and provided for a counter-trade.

Post bond in Garcia case, gov't told

THE SANDIGANBAYAN has ordered the government to post a P1-million bond as it continues to press for the recovery of the alleged ill-gotten wealth of Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia (ret.) amounting to some P143 million.

The court, through its fourth division, issued the order after it rejected a motion filed by the Office of the Ombudsman seeking to exempt the government from posting a bond in the forfeiture case it had filed against Garcia.

The court said the "filing of a bond is required in all instances. After all, the rule of law applies even to the State."

It also noted that no provision, either in the 1987 Constitution or in Republic Act No. 1379, the anti-ill gotten wealth law, exempts the government from the payment of bonds in civil cases.

The court also stressed "that the government is required like any other applicant to file a bond before an order of attachment is issued."

The 12-page decision was penned by Justice Jose Hernandez and concurred with by Justices Gregory Ong and Rodolfo Ponferrada, who make up the fourth division which is hearing the multimillion-peso graft case against Garcia.

It was the same division that had ordered the seizure last Thursday of two real estate properties in Batangas belonging to Garcia's son.

Seized by the court were two 500-sq m lots in Barangay San Gregorio, Laurel, Batangas, suspected by the government of being part of Garcia's ill-gotten wealth. The properties were registered in the name of Juan Paolo Garcia.

This was the seventh seizure of Garcia's properties since the Sandiganbayan confiscated his Honda CRV and mini-van, a resort and caregiver school in his home province of Iloilo, and two real estate properties in Baguio City.

Nelson F. Flores

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The new VelaSmooth smoothens out cellulite and re-shapes your body.

Most women have a few inches of fat here and there on their body. If left unattended, it builds up, gets trapped inside and forms the dreaded cellulite: that spongy, shadowy, lumpy fat that looks like an orange peel. It's rippled, dimpled and downright ugly as it makes your thighs and buttocks bulge unevenly. Genetics plays a major role in cellulite formation. You can't escape from it, whether you're young or advanced in years. Not even if you're slim or overweight. You can exercise and diet constantly, you can try to suck it all off through liposuction. But you can never get rid of it. Creams, gels or other over-the-counter products -- none of them really work.

Until now! Marie France Bodyline is proud to introduce a new innovation that will make your bumpy body bulges and cellulite problem non-existent. **VelaSmooth** is the latest non-invasive slimming treatment that uses Electro-Optical Synergy (ELOS) technology, which combines infrared light and radio frequency together with skin contouring action to reduce your fat bulges, improve your body shape and get rid of ugly surface fat such as cellulite.

Marie France's Dr. Ariel Torres was recently trained in Canada with Syneron, the makers of the VelaSmooth machine who developed the technology with Dr. Stephen Mulholland of SpaMedica USA. Dr. Torres explains how the treatment's state-of-the-art technology works. "Infrared light increases circulation in the treated areas so that energy stored in fat would be available for burning. Radio frequency ensures that the infrared is focused on the fat problem. Lastly, the suction helps to contour the body and create smoother, shapelier curves." Based on treatment studies, VelaSmooth is proven to give remarkable results with an average reduction in the following areas: Thighs – 4.18 cm., Abdomen-waist – 5.73 cm., Hips –5.86 cm., Braline – 4.4 cm., Calves – 2.2 cm., and Upper arms – 1.4 cm.

Cristina after the treatment: "It's gonna smoothen out the cellulite!"

After a series of this 30-minute treatment session, cellulite-ridden areas will be smoothened out, fat metabolism will be further enhanced and a visibly sexier body will be formed. It's absolutely painless, very relaxing and it succeeds where other products have failed. Dr. Torres also adds, "At Marie France, we formulated our own VelaSmooth program based on the client's body figure problem. That's why we highly recommend this for women who are unsatisfied with their body shape. It can also be used when the client has loose skin as a result of weight-and-inch loss or as a final touch at the end of a slimming program. And yes, it can also be used in combination with other Marie France treatments."

Marie France clients are impressed with what VelaSmooth can do. Actress Carmi Martin recounts, "I was invited to go to the beach before but I didn't join them. It may not be obvious to those who've seen me but I felt conscious because my tummy was showing and I didn't want to expose my cellulite when I wear a swimsuit." After trying VelaSmooth in just a few sessions, she's convinced! "I believe that it's going to be effective for re-shaping my figure. My tummy is flat again!"

Carmi Martin is all set for the VelaSmooth experience.

Former actress-turned-restaurateur Cristina Gonzalez-Romualdez got frustrated when she tried creams to lose her cellulite. "They didn't really help at all," she says, "I didn't notice any difference." Her experience with VelaSmooth has been very encouraging. "It's actually like a relaxing massage. And it's gonna smoothen out the orange-peel roughness of cellulite. I've heard that Carmi has been here for her 4th session and her tummy has flattened. So I'm waiting for my tummy to flatten, too. I can't wait to see the effects!"

Vikki Santos-Estacio once tried three jars of a certain gel for cellulite removal. "I stopped using them," she remarks, "because there were no results. I just gave up on it." Her first session of VelaSmooth gave her a far more favorable impression. "I felt as if my cellulite was being stretched out. The heat has a calming effect...and the massage, it smoothens and it's VERY soothing!" She also noticed that, "It's just like a natural massage. It feels like a 'human touch' and not a machine that's doing it. I really enjoyed it!"

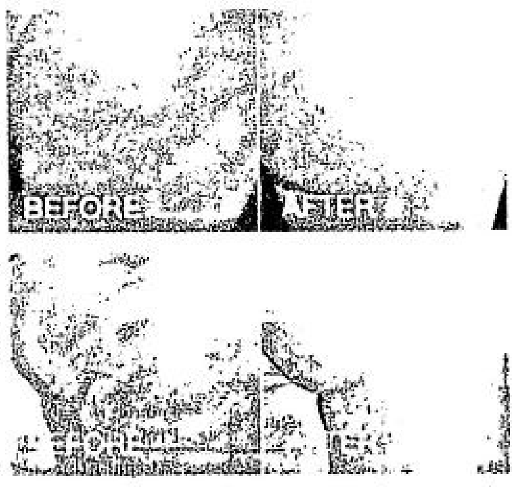
Vikki Estacio on VelaSmooth: "It feels like a 'human touch'. I really enjoyed it!"

For Jeanette Jimenez-Pumaren, she didn't see her cellulite as a problem until it became disturbingly visible. "Most women won't admit it but I'm one of those who would want to look sexy...and that's hard to do when you're battling with cellulite." She found her winning edge with VelaSmooth. "The heat, the suction," she says, "was very comfortable and I didn't feel any pain." She laughingly adds, "Get those fats out! Crush them!"

A Marie France therapist explains to Jeanette Pumaren the innovative functions of the VelaSmooth handpiece.

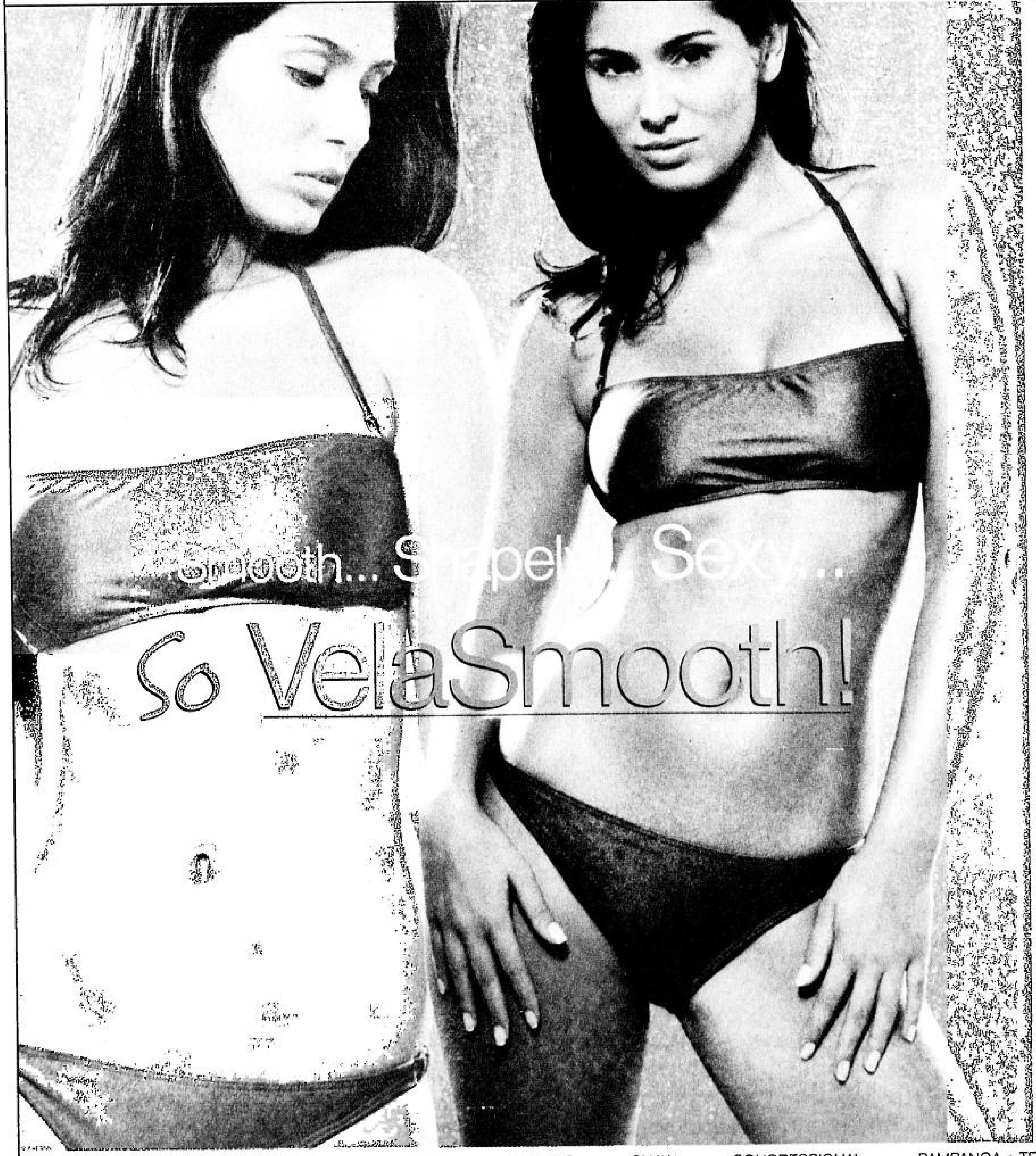
Stop using those creams and other so-called cellulite solutions. VelaSmooth is what you need to re-shape your body effortlessly and get rid of cellulite effectively. You'll see your bumpy bulges become smoother, your pounds will melt away and the next time you wear body-hugging clothes, you'll be amazed that it fits much better! Call Marie France at 894-BODY (2639) and ask about VelaSmooth.

VelaSmooth is the machine of the future...a non-invasive treatment that will finally smoothen those bumps.



1 month after 8 treatments

Excellent results 6 weeks after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Shell, Caltex, Total raise prices by 50¢

FOLLOWING the lead of their smaller counterparts, Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp, Caltex Phil. Inc. and Total (Phil.) Corp. yesterday hiked the prices of their gasoline, diesel and kerosene by 50 centavos a liter.

Shell and Caltex implemented its price hike at 12:01 a.m., while Total adjusted its prices at 6 a.m.

The three firms cited the surge in world oil prices as well as competitive market forces as their reason for jacking up pump prices.

"The high cost of oil in the world market is affecting most countries. Even in Indonesia, an oil exporting country, the government had to increase domestic oil prices by 30 percent last week," said Shell general manager for external affairs Roberto Kanapi.

Oil refiner Petron Corp. continued to hold off on hiking its prices. No announcement had been made as of press time.

The March 1-3 average for the regional benchmark Dubai crude was placed at a high $43.26 a barrel, almost $4 higher than the February average of $39.87 a barrel.

The price of unleaded gasoline based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products likewise surged to an average of $57.65 a barrel in the first three days of March, more than $3 higher than last month's average of $54.27 a barrel.

The price of MOPS-based diesel also soared to a March 1-3 average of $65.51 a barrel, up by almost $10 from the February average of $55.63 a barrel.

Since the beginning of the year, local gasoline prices had gone up twice by a total of P1.10 a liter. Diesel prices, on the other hand, had risen thrice by a total of P1.30 a liter. *Abigail L. Ho*

COPW BULLETIN NO. 5
VAT MUST BE IMPOSED ON ALL SECTORS IN LIEU OF ALL OTHER TAXES. WE NEED MULTI-TIERED VAT RATES VS A SINGLE RATE DURING THE TRANSITION PHASE TO PROTECT THE POOR.

WHY VAT IN LIEU OF OTHER TAXES

- For simplicity and more effective implementation, as a general rule, the VAT should replace ALL other taxes - gross receipts tax, franchise tax, percentage taxes.
- Banks and the financial services sector must be included.
- The VAT should not result in loss of income to the government. The rate should be revenue neutral and FAIR and EQUITABLE to all.

WHY GOVERNMENT MUST TELL THE TRUTH ON VAT

This has always been COPW's stand.

As far back as September 2004, we informed our consumers that unless we reflect the true cost of basic services, we will be in a fiscal crisis like Argentina's - sooner than later.

We owe the consumers full disclosure on the VAT because they look upon us for transparency in determining what the additional cost will be to them.

The COPW, the House of Representatives and the Senate all agree that full disclosure of pertinent information should be done to facilitate decision-making.

For the sake of the country and our people, we trust that judgment of the Bicameral Conference will meet the challenge of statesmanship and pass the revenue bills that are fair and equitable to all. In so doing, we can get out of this crisis sooner than later, create jobs, and get the economy going.

A 2% VAT ON NAPOCOR TO BRING ALL SECTORS IN THE VAT SYSTEM IS BETTER THAN TAX EXEMPTION FOR NAPOCOR

- The DOE says imposing a 10% VAT on generating plants and IPPs results in a 40-centavo per kilowatt-hour (KWH) electricity rate increase for consumers in the Luzon grid. It has not considered the pending petition with ERC of 89 centavos per KWH and a third rate increase to recover the P8 billion loss, a result of the partial increase granted by Napocor.
- Napocor generates 2,260 megawatts (MW) of hydro power and another 835 MW of geothermal power in Luzon. These do not have any input tax credit since Napocor is tax-exempt.

A 3% VAT ON PETROLEUM PRODUCTS TO PUT ALL SECTORS IN THE VAT SYSTEM

- Our position is based on the following pre-conditions:
  - For the DOE and oil companies to inform the consuming public of the prices of diesel, gasoline and LPG *WITH AND WITHOUT VAT.*
  - For the DOE and the oil companies to state the VAT that will be passed on to the consumers at the pump or gas station which we estimate to be at ***72 centavos per liter for diesel. But the actual pass on rate should be lower because the oil refiners and the new players will apply their input tax credit and ONLY THE VAT THAT THEY WILL PAY SHOULD BE PASSED ON TO THE CONSUMERS.***
- Since they favor only one rate of VAT to be applied on gasoline, diesel, LPG and kerosene, Petron, Shell and Caltex must tell the public what is that SINGLE RATE.

A 2% VAT ON GENCOs AND IPPs TO PUT ALL SECTORS IN THE VAT SYSTEM

COPW will request for the AMENDMENT of the EPIRA Law that ALL NEW POWER PLANTS, which will be privatized, must pay corporate income tax, since they are getting a guaranteed profit approved by the ERC.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS IN THEIR ORIGINAL STATE SHOULD BE SUBJECT TO 1 ½ % VAT

A 1 ½% VAT with a presumptive input tax of 1 ½% will have the net effect that producers of rice, fish, beef, pork, vegetables and fruits will NOT pay VAT. However, Agro processors will NOT be entitled to a presumptive input tax of 1.5 %.

AGRICULTURAL AND ELECTRIC COOPERATIVES MUST PAY A VAT OF 2%

ALL must pay VAT when their threshold income exceeds P700,000. Pegging a threshold income of P700,000 means that non-commercial cooperatives don't need to: keep tedious accounting records, pay VAT monthly and register their sales and input taxes.

PRIME COMMODITIES MUST BE SUBJECT TO 6% VAT

We have NO objection to the House proposal to reduce the VAT rate on prime commodities like sardines, refined sugar, cooking oil, pandesal, instant noodles, since these are already subject to 10% VAT and they have input-tax credit to apply to their output tax.

DOCTORS AND LAWYERS MUST PAY 10% VAT

ALL must pay VAT when their threshold gross income exceeds P700,000 per year. Doctors who work in government and small private hospitals and clinics and small-time practicing lawyers need NOT worry as they are exempt from VAT.

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Proposed buy-back of Petron shares backed, bucked

By Michael Lim Ubac, Christine O. Avendaño, TJ Burgonio; and Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

THE PROPOSAL to buy back the government's majority stake in Petron Corp. in a bid to arrest the skyrocketing pump prices of gasoline and other petroleum products has drawn mixed reactions.

While some congressmen strongly opposed the buy-back of Petron shares, the move was being supported by militant groups.

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero told the INQUIRER that the government could ill-afford such a drastic move due to its huge fiscal deficit.

"We don't have money. Let's start with something that will not cost us additional expenses," said Escudero.

Rep. Prospero Pichay (Lakas, Surigao del Sur) said reacquiring the majority stake in Petron Corp. would send the wrong signal to international investors who would think that the government was reverting to a regulated regime.

"This will not change even if we buy back Petron, and going back to the previous regime of regulated local fuel prices will have a heavy impact on our budget deficit, not to mention the billions needed for Petron's reacquisition," he said.

At present, the government, through the Philippine National Oil Co., owns a 40-percent stake in Petron with Saudi Aramco controlling the other 40 percent and the public, 20 percent.

On Saturday, Senate President Franklin Drilon revived calls for the government to buy back its majority stake, saying this would be the "quick solution" to the escalating cost of oil.

Drilon had found an ally in militant Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran who also expressed support for the buy-back of Petron shares.

"The Philippine government should not be afraid to rescind its contracts with foreign investors if it means defending the welfare of the Filipino people against the escalating prices of oil and, consequently, that of basic goods and crucial social services," Beltran said in a statement.

Instead of buying back Petron shares, Escudero wants Congress to review the Oil Deregulation Law.

"The minority supports amending the law, and let's see if we can have checks and balances for the benefit of the people," said Escudero.

But Pichay pointed out that allies of Malacañang in the Lower House were not keen on reverting to the deregulated regime where the government played a major role in fixing pump prices.

Malacañang is banking on the energy department's review of the Oil Deregulation Law in finding ways to address the escalating price of oil.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye yesterday said no discussions had been held on Drilon's proposal to reacquire the majority stake in Petron.

"What we are discussing right now is the review of the Oil Deregulation Law and outgoing Energy Secretary Vincent Perez has formed a five-member committee to do this and they are expected to submit their recommendation for Congressional approval," Bunye said in an interview over RMN radio.

Give Palace franchise to hike VAT, says Mar

By TJ Burgonio and Christine O. Avendaño

AMID apprehensions the squabble between the Senate and the House of Representatives could affect the proposed value added tax measure in the bicameral conference committee, Sen. Mar Roxas has proposed granting Malacañang a franchise to raise the VAT.

Roxas said he would endorse a proposal granting President Macapagal-Arroyo a franchise to increase the VAT rate on goods and services from 10 to 12 percent if the Senate and the House failed to agree on a new VAT rate.

"Assuming we cannot agree on the VAT upward rate adjustment, we would favor a (VAT reform) bill that would give the Chief Executive the flexibility to increase the VAT rate," he said in a statement.

"This is better than a (VAT reform) bill that would rely solely on the scrapping of VAT exemptions to generate the desired new revenues needed to address the government's financial difficulties," he said.

Roxas chairs the Senate committees on economic affairs, and on trade and commerce.

On Saturday, Senate President Franklin Drilon said he expected a "very difficult" bicameral conference over the VAT because of bruised feelings and expressed the fear the bicam could result in a deadlock unless the Senate and House row was settled.

Sen. Ralph Recto, who will sponsor his committee report on the VAT bill today for floor deliberations and debates, however, doused fears of a possible deadlock between the two chambers in the bicameral conference committee.

"Both houses will overcome the issue of the budget. For now, the feelings still run high, but these will die down in the coming weeks," said Recto.

Recto has proposed the existing 10-percent VAT rate be maintained but would lift the VAT exemptions enjoyed by independent power producers, airlines, shipping companies and others. The House favors an increase from 10 to 12 percent.

"I'm not so much worried about the bicameral conference. What I'm worried about is the public's reaction to the measure. Will they accept it?" he added in a phone interview.

Recto, chair of the committee on ways and means, had voiced confidence the Senate would reach a compromise with the House on the VAT bill.

Malacañang was also confident Congress would be able to pass the VAT measure before it goes on recess for the Lenten break on March 18.

"We have total confidence in the determination of our Congressional leaders to pass the VAT measure before Congress takes a break," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said yesterday.

"I think that is enough time for the Senate to pass its version of the VAT," Bunye said in an interview over RMN radio.

Corrections

IN THE MARCH 4 issue, the headline story — "Scrap Senate, House urges" — misstated the length of Taguig-Pateros Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano's tenure in the House of Representatives. Cayetano is not a neophyte congressman; he is on his third and final term as congressman, having first been elected to the House in 1998.

* * *

IN THE MARCH 4 issue, a Business story on Page B2 — "Insurance sector too heavily taxed, says study" — misstated that the author of the study, Edwin S. Pineda, said he owned an insurance company. Pineda, a senior economist at University of Asia and the Pacific, never owned or operated an insurance company. This should remove any impression that his tax reform advocacy in the insurance industry was self-serving and biased.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses:glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

Complaints about lack of fairness or objectivity may be sent to Raul Palabrica, readers' advocate, the same address and fax numbers as those of the city editor, and e-mail address:rpalabrica@inquirer.com.ph.

Rebel leader says Reds may put up own media

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—Should Congress legislate media interviews on the revolutionary movement, communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal said the insurgents would have no option but to put up their own underground media outlets.

"Like... our own clandestine radio stations and [the] publication of revolutionary newspapers, aside from the present existing regional news journals," Rosal said in a mobile phone interview.

The Communist Party of the Philippines regularly publishes "Ang Bayan," the official news organ of the revolutionary movement.

On Friday, the military said it was recommending stiff penalties against media organizations that interviewed known terrorists in the proposed antiterrorism law.

Armed Forces of the Philippines deputy chief of staff Lt. Gen. Edilberto Adan's suggestion to impose the penalties carried official weight, AFP spokesperson Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual told reporters yesterday.

"That is an official input of the Armed Forces" to the proposed antiterrorism bill, Pascual said.

Rosal in a statement said, "In pushing for the interview ban, the Arroyo regime wants to ban revolutionaries from broadcasting their ideas. They now want the Filipino journalist to be co-opted to their 'yes sir culture' with no questions asked."

Leftist groups also assailed the military for its proposal.

"The military aims to dictate [to] the media. The ban is tantamount to saying media organizations should be the mouthpieces of the government and military," Robert de Castro, Bayan Muna deputy secretary general, said in a statement.

For its part, the militant fisherfolk group Pambansang Lakas ng Kilusang Mamamalakaya ng Pilipinas urged the media to rise above the occasion "and spoil the grandiose plot to criminalize objectivity, truth and honest-to-goodness reporting..." *With Dona Z. Pazzibugan*

Villar wants telcos probed on unused cell phone loads

SEN. MANUEL Villar is seeking a Senate inquiry into the legality of telecommunication firms' practice of forfeiting in their favor the unused stored value of pre-paid cellular phone cards bought by their subscribers.

Villar, chair of the Senate committee on finance, has filed Senate Resolution 200 directing the committee on public services to open an inquiry into the "unused value forfeiture policy" adopted by a number of telecommunication companies.

The policy, he said, could be a violation of Republic Act No. 7925, which provides that rates of telecom firms "must be fair, reflective of a fair return on their investments, reasonable and are not distorted."

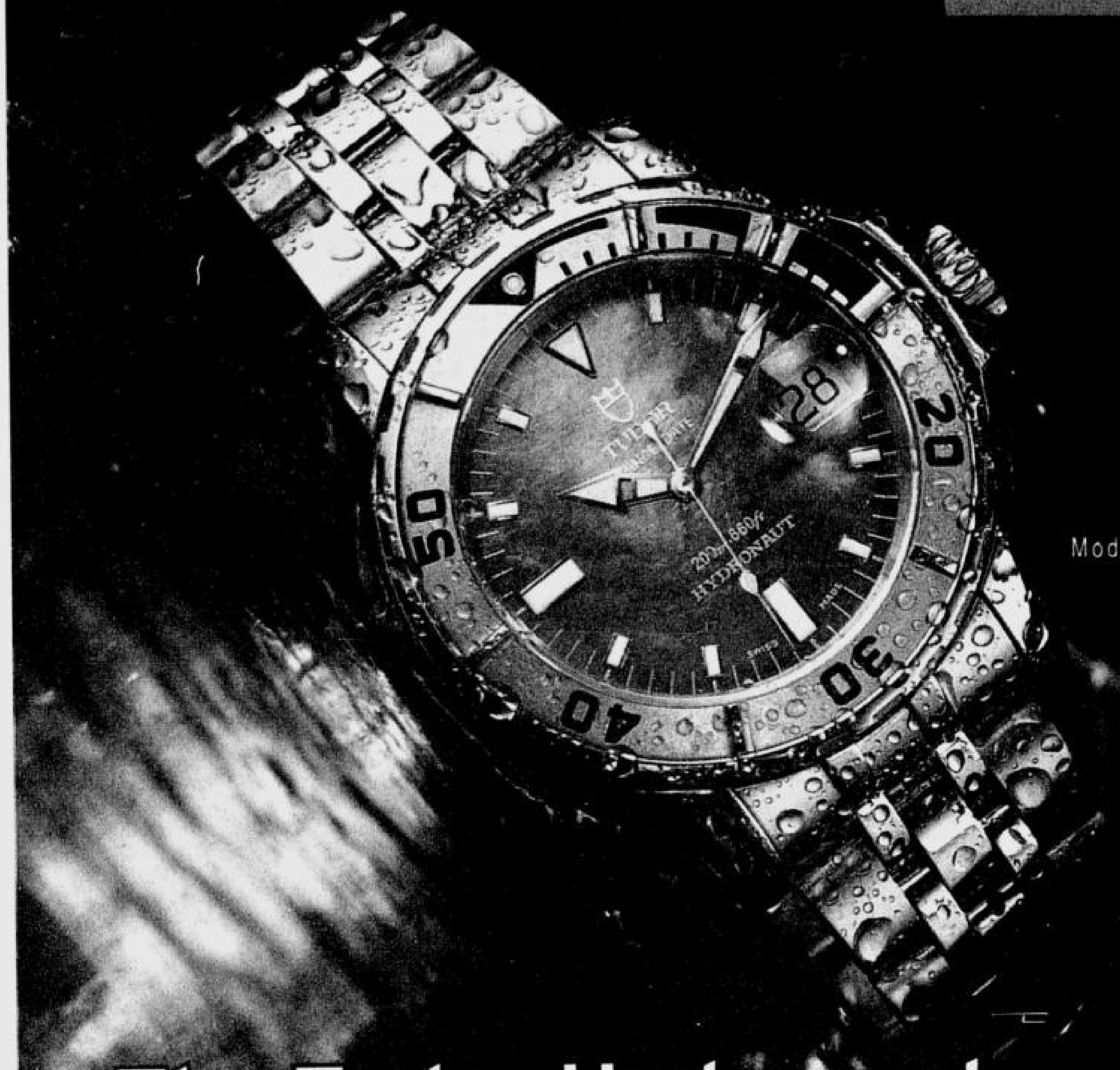
"It came to my attention that the value of prepaid cards that phone subscribers buy, if not consumed or used within a certain period of time, are being forfeited in favor of the telecom companies. The forfeited values are then included in their operating revenue," Villar said in a statement.

"I would like to know whether such policy or practice violates certain laws," he said.

In his resolution, Villar cited the practice of Globe Telecom of putting a 15-day limit on the use of P100-denominated pre-paid cards and a 60-day limit on P250 to P1,000 pre-paid cards.

Smart Communications, on the other hand, sets a three-day limit on the use of its P30 autoload, a six-day limit on P60 auto-load, 12-day limit on P115 auto-load, 30-day limit on P200 auto-load, and 60-day limit on P300, P500 and P1,000-denominated cell cards, he said.

Villar said he found the time limit on prepaid cards "too short," especially for low-income earners. *TJ Burgonio*



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- Level 2, Shangri-La Plaza Mall
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WASHINGTON JEWELRY EMPORIUM
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- Level 3, Mega B, SM Megamall
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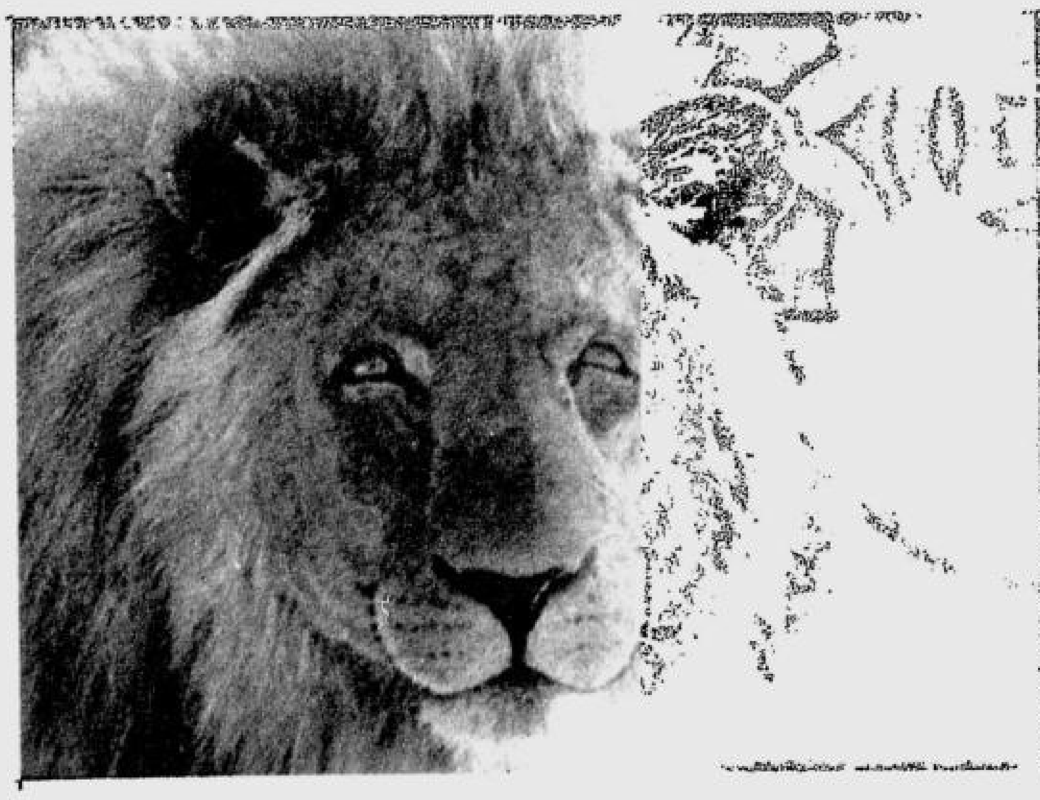

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Congress casualty of intra-chamber fight over budget

From page A1

From this perspective, the executive has clearly been the beneficiary of the intra-parliamentary conflict.

The issue in this intra-chamber war does not center on differences over the House and Senate versions of the budget bill but stems from the Senate bypass of the bicameral conference committee. The committee's function is to resolve the differences in the Senate and House versions of a bill.

The bypass thereby rendered redundant the bicameral conference, a hallowed legislative procedure.

The facts of this controversy are by now well known and their details need no repetition.

For the sake of brevity, the senators have claimed that House members are up in arms because their alleged plan to restore cuts in their pork barrel had been foiled by the bypass.

On the other hand, House members have claimed that the Senate abbreviated the process after cutting its own deal with Ms Arroyo by realigning the cuts in the President's intelligence funds to the senators' pork barrel, which had also been reduced.

Single chamber assembly

In anger, some House members have called for the abolition of the Senate and the conversion of the legislature into a single chamber assembly, thereby renewing the untimely call for the adoption of the parliamentary system, which is irrelevant to the current dispute.

This call is in itself a manifestation of the muddled minds that inhabit Congress.

Abolition of budgetary positions is a favorite threat members of Congress hurl at supplicants at budgetary hearings where department secretaries and bureau directors, who offend the congressmen, are browbeaten and humiliated.

So, it is not surprising that members of the House are threatening to abolish the Senate, which is co-equal with the House, in the legislature's own system of intra-chamber checks and balances. Besides, they cannot threaten senators with impeachment.

Unfortunately, this tactic which works so well on easily intimidated bureaucrats, has not worked with the senators, many of whom tend to look down on their lower parliamentary fellows as a bunch of immature and spoiled brats.

In reality, there are quite a number of congressmen who give the lie to this popular stereotype.

Executive unscathed

In this intra-chamber war, Congress is the casualty while the President has escaped unscathed. At the same time, Ms Arroyo has gotten what she has wanted—passage of the budget with an up-to-date outlook rather than a reenacted budget that by its very nature restricts programs designed to boost economic growth.

The Senate-House squabble also reveals the malignancy of the sub-culture of applying the notion of checks and balances to the extreme—within the legislature and outside the framework of checks and balances among the executive, Congress and the Supreme Court.

In the bickering, what is revealed is that within the tripartite system, there exists a sub-layer in the legislature whose effect is to create stalemates in law making.

This potential for stalemates gives the President the opportunity to use divide and rule tactics on Congress. The discord over the budget has provided ammunition to the argument that Congress has become redundant and that strengthening executive powers is the key to a government that delivers the goods.

Destructive

For this reason, the House and the Senate should stop their silly dispute that is destructive to both chambers.

The Senate action was reportedly motivated by the possibility of having a third reenacted budget since 2003, with its deleterious effects on the economy, and by the paltry consideration that the senators faced the prospect of being denied their plans for Easter holiday break if the budget bill had to go through another indefinite delay in the bicameral conference.

The House had allegedly stalled the conference committee reportedly because the lower chamber might use it as a bargaining venue for the restoration of pork barrel cuts, holding hostage the bill increasing the value-added tax, an urgent revenue measure.

The controversy puts under the spotlight the flaws of the bicameral conference. It has been shown that in the case of the 2005 budget, the conference has become the venue for horse-trading that should have taken place in the process of congressional hearings, the plenary debates, and the passage of bills on second and finally on third reading.

The passage in the Senate of the budget should not make Ms Arroyo complacent that the passage of the bill increasing the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent has been assured.

The VAT bill cannot avoid the bicameral conference where the horse-trading is bound to reappear in a more vicious form as a result of the Senate-House row. It can easily be hijacked by their venomous feud.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, March 7, 2005
4th Week of Lent

1st Reading: Is 65:17-21
Gospel: John 4:43-54

In those days Jesus left Samaria for Galilee. Jesus himself said that no prophet is recognized in his own country. Yet the Galileans welcomed him when he arrived, because of all the things he had done in Jerusalem during the Festival and which they had seen. For they, too, had gone to the feast.

Jesus went back to Cana of Galilee where he had changed the water into wine. At Capernaum there was an official whose son was ill, and when he heard that Jesus had come from Judea to Galilee, he went and asked him to come and heal his son, for he was at the point of death.

Jesus said, "Unless you see signs and wonders, you will not believe!" The official said, "Sir, come down before my child dies." And Jesus replied, "Go, your son is living."

The man had faith in the word that Jesus spoke to him and went his way. He was already going down the hilly road when his servants met him with this news, "Your son has recovered!" So he asked them at what hour the child had begun to recover and they said to him, "The fever left him yesterday in the afternoon about one o'clock." And the father realized that it was the time when Jesus told him, "Your son is living." And he became a believer, he and all his family.

Jesus performed this second miraculous sign when he returned from Judea to Galilee.

Commentary

Jesus heals the son of an official. Yet Jesus rebukes him gently (and the crowd) saying that everyone wants signs for themselves, rather than to believe in him, his words and his presence. The man pleads and the son is cured. The man believes in Jesus' word and he and his whole family become believers. How many times have we been healed, cured, cared for by God—and yet, do we believe his word to us in Jesus? Do we listen and hear his word of the Scripture and immediately go to obey—without needing proof, or some sign of Jesus' goodness and power. Do we stake our lives daily on the Word of God in Scripture and move immediately to put it into practice and make it come true in our lives. Jesus, may we believe in you and know you not for what you would do for us, but because you are Truth.

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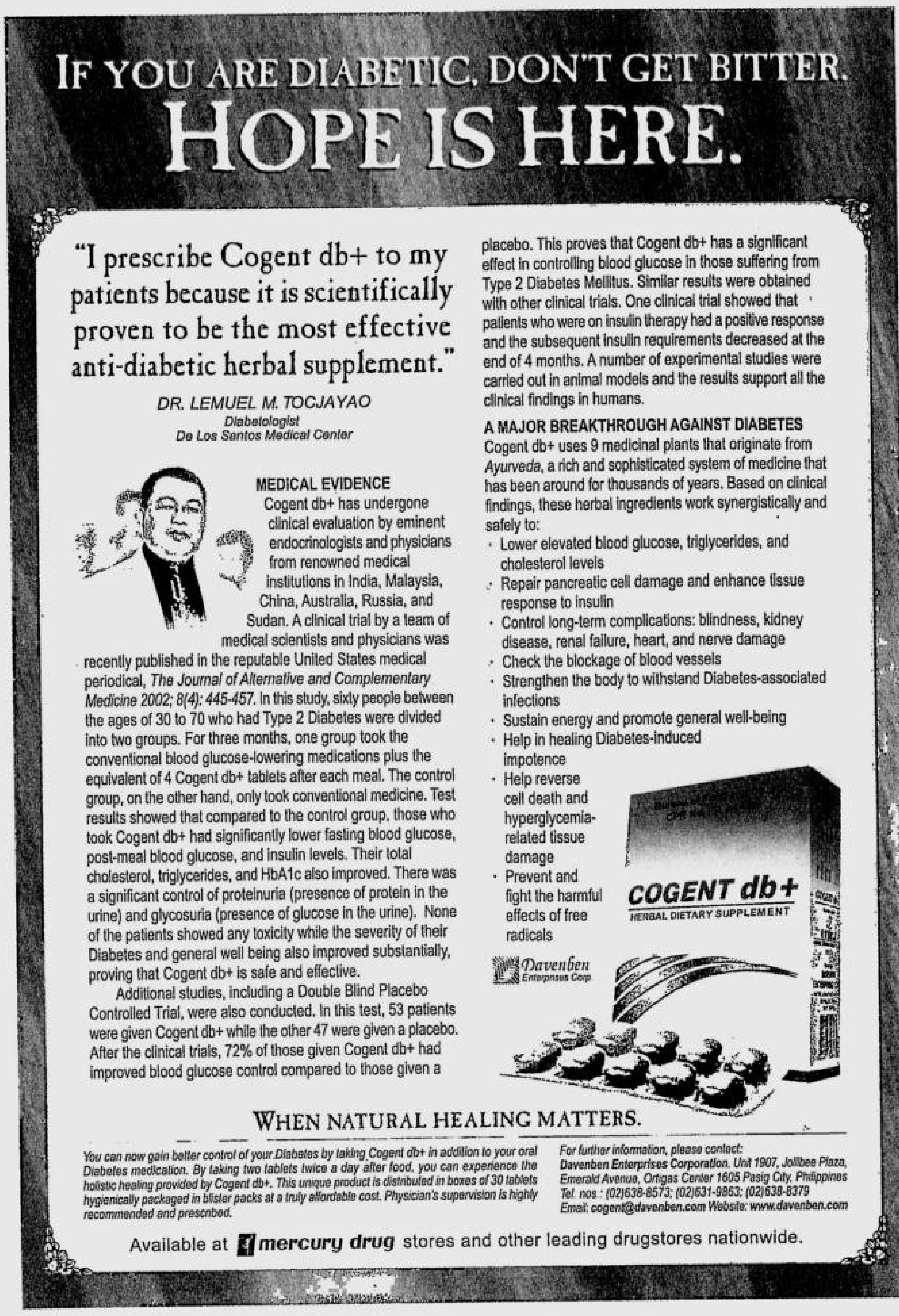
SUPREME COURT DOCTRINES

REMEDIAL LAW (CIVIL PROCEDURE)—**Service by registered mail**—The rule is that service by registered mail is complete upon actual receipt thereof by the addressee, except when the addressee does not claim his mail within five days from the date of the first notice of the postmaster, in which case, the service shall take effect within the said period. The certification from the postmaster would be the best evidence to prove that the notice had been validly made. However, if there is nothing on record showing how, when, and to whom, the delivery of the registry notices of the registered mail was made, the court should not rely on the notation "return to sender: unclaimed" to support the presumption of constructive service. As admitted by petitioners, a copy of the January 4, 1993 Order of the trial court was sent to and received by their counsel on January 14, 1993. A copy of the same order was placed on a sealed brown envelope, addressed to the petitioners. The records also contain a registry notice addressed to the petitioners. There is no showing that the notice was sent to or received by the petitioners. In fact, the respondent even failed to submit to the trial court a certificate from the postmaster stating that the clerk of court sent a notice of registered mail to the petitioners' counsel and that the latter received the same. And yet, the trial court declared the petitioners as in default for their counsel's failure to appear for pre-trial and to file their brief three days before February 19, 1993. The trial court erred in declaring the petitioners as in default, in allowing the respondent to adduce its evidence ex parte, and in rendering judgment by default against the petitioners. [Citations omitted.] [Justice Callejo, Sr., Second Division, Peña vs Court of Appeals, G. R. No. 126275, November 11, 2004]

By R. B. Vera



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MEDICAL EVIDENCE
Cogent db+ has undergone clinical evaluation by eminent endocrinologists and physicians from renowned medical institutions in India, Malaysia, China, Australia, Russia, and Sudan. A clinical trial by a team of medical scientists and physicians was recently published in the reputable United States medical periodical, *The Journal of Alternative and Complementary Medicine 2002; 8(4): 445-457*. In this study, sixty people between the ages of 30 to 70 who had Type 2 Diabetes were divided into two groups. For three months, one group took the conventional blood glucose-lowering medications plus the equivalent of 4 Cogent db+ tablets after each meal. The control group, on the other hand, only took conventional medicine. Test results showed that compared to the control group, those who took Cogent db+ had significantly lower fasting blood glucose, post-meal blood glucose, and insulin levels. Their total cholesterol, triglycerides, and HbA1c also improved. There was a significant control of proteinuria (presence of protein in the urine) and glycosuria (presence of glucose in the urine). None of the patients showed any toxicity while the severity of their Diabetes and general well being also improved substantially, proving that Cogent db+ is safe and effective.

Additional studies, including a Double Blind Placebo Controlled Trial, were also conducted. In this test, 53 patients were given Cogent db+ while the other 47 were given a placebo. After the clinical trials, 72% of those given Cogent db+ had improved blood glucose control compared to those given a placebo. This proves that Cogent db+ has a significant effect in controlling blood glucose in those suffering from Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus. Similar results were obtained with other clinical trials. One clinical trial showed that patients who were on insulin therapy had a positive response and the subsequent insulin requirements decreased at the end of 4 months. A number of experimental studies were carried out in animal models and the results support all the clinical findings in humans.

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Keep price of rice within reach of poor, GMA orders NFA

WITH the country bracing for more frequent petroleum price hikes, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday ordered the National Food Authority to make sure the price of its rice would remain at its present levels.

In a statement, the President ordered that NFA rice be sold at its current price of P16/kg for ordinary regular milled rice and P18/kg for special well-milled rice for the first half of the year.

Ms Arroyo also directed the NFA to ensure that government rice would be accessible to the public at all times at all of its accredited outlets nationwide.

"All available means must be explored to keep (rice) within [the] reach of the poor," the President said.

"If necessary," part of the funds to be generated by the new tax measures would be used to subsidize the price of rice, she said.

NFA officials yesterday told Reuters the Philippines had bought 400,000 tons of rice for April-May delivery, with 350,000 tons coming from Vietnam.

The officials said the Philippines also bought 250,000 tons of 25 percent broken rice variety from Vietnamese suppliers at $284.47 (roughly P15,600) per ton, including cost and freight.

Trading firms Noble Grain and Thai Maparn Trading Co. Ltd. won contracts to supply 25,000 tons each of the same variety of rice at $284.35 per ton and $283.91 per ton, respectively, Reuters reported. *Christine O. Avendaño; Reuters*

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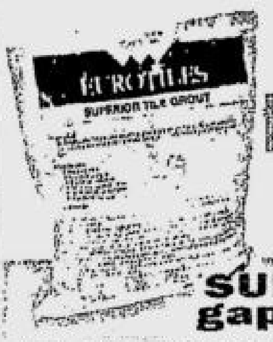

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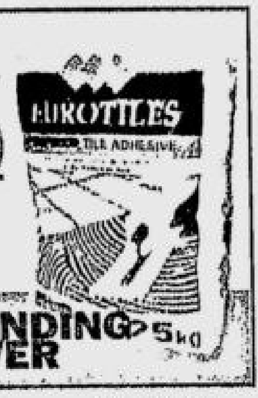

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Syria vows swift pullout from Lebanon

BEIRUT—Syria vowed a swift two-phased withdrawal of its troops from Lebanon in what the Lebanese press described on Sunday as a historic move opening a new chapter after 30 years of Syrian domination.

Under intense global pressure, Syrian President Bashar al-Assad announced plans on Saturday for a complete pullout but said Damascus would still play a role in its tiny neighbor.

Lebanese greeted Assad's announcement with screams of delight in central Beirut, while opposition figures in Lebanon and European leaders cautiously described the move as positive.

But Washington, which says Syrian "support for terrorism" impedes Middle East peace, dismissed the plan as inadequate and reiterated its call for a complete and immediate withdrawal.

"We wake up in Lebanon today to a new political reality, the opening of a new phase in the country's history," As-Safir newspaper said in a front-page editorial. Al-Mustaqbal daily labelled the announcement "a historic event."

Under mounting international pressure and faced with daily protests inside Lebanon to end its security presence, Assad told parliament Syrian troops would initially pull back to the Bekaa Valley in eastern Lebanon and then to the border area.

"By this measure Syria would have fulfilled its commitment toward the Taif Accord and implemented (UN Security Council) Resolution 1559," he said.

The Taif Accord ended Lebanon's 1975-1990 civil war and, among other points, stipulated the withdrawal of Syrian troops from most of the country within two years. Resolution 1559, adopted last September by the UN Security Council at the initiative of the United States and France, called for foreign troops to quit Lebanon completely.

Syrian Cabinet Minister Buthaina Shaaban said troops would withdraw to the Syrian side of the border "as soon as possible logistically" and that a meeting between the two countries' leaders on Monday would agree on the details, including timing.

Syrian troops have been in Lebanon since intervening in its civil war in the 1970s, and it currently has about 14,000 troops there, down from 40,000.

"Syria's withdrawal from Lebanon does not mean the absence of Syria's role," Assad said. "Syria's strength and its role in Lebanon is not dependent on the presence of its forces in Lebanon."

Damascus has viewed Lebanon as a strategic asset and key economic outlet for decades.

But it has come under growing Lebanese, Arab and wider pressure to quit the country since the assassination of former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik al-Hariri last month. Many pointed the finger at Syria, which denies any role in the killing.

Lebanon's main opposition leader Walid Jumblatt said Assad's speech was a "positive start ... Our hands are extended with the insistence on a timetable for the withdrawal." The United States, Syria's most vocal critic, said Assad's pledge to pull back had not gone far enough.

"We mean complete withdrawal—no half-hearted measures," said White House spokesperson Erin Healy.

Russia, Britain and the European Union called Assad's announcement a first step toward full withdrawal.

UN special envoy Terje Roed-Larsen is expected to go to Beirut and Damascus this week to discuss the "full, complete and immediate implementation of Security Council Resolution 1559."

Iran said it respected any joint Syrian-Lebanese decision, though it did not want Lebanese unity or sovereignty endangered. *Reuters*

LEBANESE protesters wave their national flag as they watch on a giant screen in the Martyrs Square the address by Syrian President Bashar al-Assad saying that Syria would pull its troops in Lebanon back to the eastern Bekaa Valley and then to the border. AFP

Chavez says he has evidence Washington plotting his assassination

NEW DELHI—Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez said on Saturday he had evidence that the United States was planning to assassinate him, an accusation that a US official quickly denied.

"We have enough evidence. ... If anything happens to me, the person responsible will be the president of the United States," Chavez told reporters in New Delhi. He did not offer any evidence.

In comments published Saturday by local media in Caracas, the US ambassador to Venezuela, William Brownfield, said his country had "no plans or thoughts of assassinating either the president here or any other leader."

"That would be a violation of our federal law," added Brownfield.

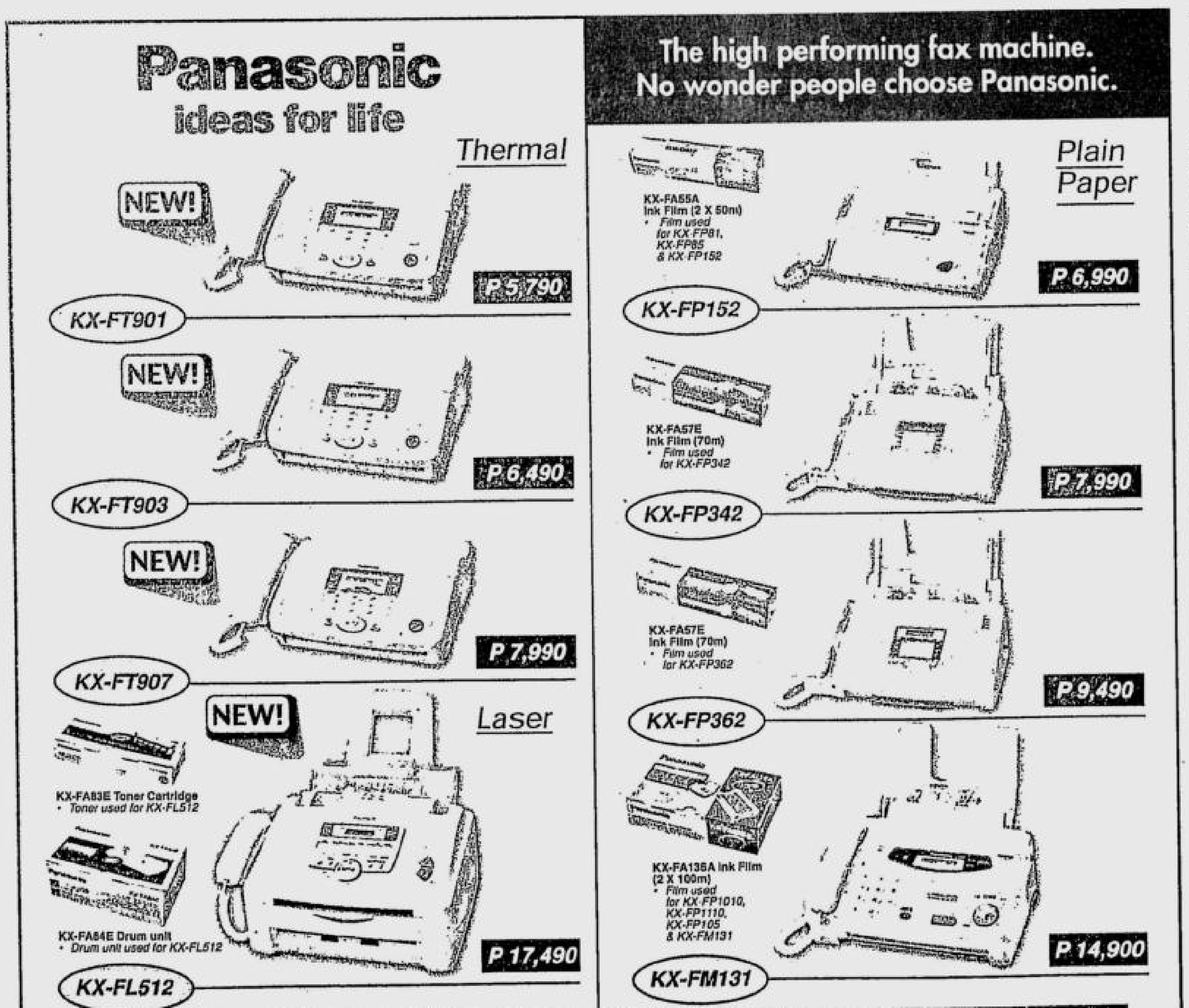
The exchange of accusations between the left-wing Chavez and US officials has reached fever pitch in recent weeks, raising questions whether the multibillion-dollar energy relationship between Washington and one of its top oil suppliers is at risk.

On Friday in New Delhi, Chavez said his country would not stop supplying oil to the United States unless "the US government gets a little bit crazy and tries to hurt us."

Brownfield said geographical proximity made the United States and Venezuela "natural" trade partners but added: "If the United States doesn't buy oil from Venezuela, we'll buy oil from another country, and if Venezuela doesn't sell oil to the US, it'll sell oil to another country."

Venezuela's Foreign Minister Ali Rodriguez told the Organization of American States last month that US accusations against Chavez were a sign of an impending attack.

Washington dismissed what it termed these "wild charges." *Reuters*



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Thousands in Taiwan rally vs China antisecession law

KAOHSIUNG, Taiwan—Tens of thousands of Taiwanese rallied Sunday in southern Taiwan to protest China's plans to enact an antisecession law aimed at preventing the island from declaring formal independence.

The angry crowd organized by the radical Taiwan Solidarity Union (TSU) burned a huge Chinese flag before former President Lee Teng-hui, now the party's leader, spoke.

"As the Chinese communists are increasingly worried about the growing desire of Taiwan people wanting to be master of their own, Beijing decided to enact the antisecession law," said Lee.

Taiwan is part of the world, but was "never part of China," he said.

The crowds, estimated by police at around 20,000, held banners and chanted slogans while marching in southern Kaohsiung city, a stronghold of the island's pro-independence movement.

"Opposing annexation, safeguarding Taiwan," the demonstrators shouted.

Some 40 percent of Taiwanese want formal independence from China and 68 percent said they would fight for the cause if war breaks out, according to a survey released in December by the cable news network TVBS.

"As people of a free and democratic country, we must come out to defend our right, or we might become the slaves of an authoritarian country," Lee said.

Beijing is planning to pass the law at the end of a full session of its National People's Congress, or parliament, on March 14.

The TSU threatened to enact an "antiannexation" law if China ignored demands to drop its proposed legislation.

In the northern capital city of Taipei, a gathering by the ruling Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) drew at least 1,000 protesters.

"Taiwan is an independent sovereign state. Taiwan and China are two separate countries," DPP secretary general Lee Yi-yang said. *AFP*

Submarine exercise may have killed dolphins in US

WASHINGTON—The US government has launched an investigation into whether the mass beaching of dolphins in south Florida this past week was caused by naval exercises involving a sonar-equipped submarine, officials said late Saturday.

More than 60 disoriented dolphins swam into ankle-deep waters off the Florida Keys near the town of Marathon last Wednesday, prompting a massive rescue operation involving wildlife officials and dozens of volunteers.

Some mammals have been successfully led back to deep water. But about two dozen others have already died or have been euthanized to stop their suffering. More dolphins are being taken care of by biologists and park rangers.

Nobody knows exactly at this point what caused the dolphins to beach.

But US Navy and environmental officials said they were looking into the possibility that top-secret exercises involving the USS Philadelphia, a Los-Angeles-class attack submarine, had anything to do with the tragic events.

"The Navy takes this very seriously and is, of course, interested in the outcome" of the investigation, Senior Chief Gregg Snaza, a spokesperson for the US Fleet Force Command, told AFP in a telephone interview from Norfolk, Virginia.

He said the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration was leading the probe, but the military was "concerned" about the incident and was providing full cooperation as they wait for the results of necropsies. *AFP*

Freed Italian hostage says US shooting in Iraq was unjustified

ROME—Freed Italian hostage Giuliana Sgrena said on her return from Iraq Saturday that the shooting by US soldiers which left her wounded and an Italian intelligence officer dead was not justified, as Rome awaited an explanation of the incident from Washington.

The firing on the road to Baghdad airport late Friday threatened to cast a pall over relations between Rome and Washington, which are close allies in the Iraq conflict.

US Ambassador to Rome Mel Sembler told Italian Prime Minister Silvio Berlusconi he had asked Washington for an urgent explanation of what happened.

"Everything will be done to shed full light on the incident," which ended Sgrena's monthlong ordeal, a statement issued by Berlusconi's office cited the envoy as saying.

Sgrena, the 56-year-old correspondent of the communist daily Il Manifesto, told Italian investigators the US troops' intense fire had been in no way justified by the speed of her car, ANSA news agency said.

"Our vehicle was running at normal speed which could not be misunderstood," she said, rejecting US fears of a possible suicide attack.

"It wasn't a checkpoint but a patrol which immediately opened fire after they trained their light on us," Sgrena said.

The US military said Friday Sgrena's convoy had ignored signals to stop, and that US soldiers had waved their hands and arms, flashed white lights and fired warning shots in a failed attempt to get the vehicle to stop.

But Sgrena told RaiNews24 television Saturday that a "hail of bullets" rained down on the car taking her to safety at Baghdad airport, along with three Italian intelligence officers, killing one of them.

"I was speaking to (officer) Nicola Calipari (...) when he leant on me, probably to protect me, and then collapsed and I realized he was dead," said Sgrena, who was being questioned on Saturday by two Italian magistrates.

"They continued shooting and the driver couldn't even explain that we were Italians. It was really horrible," she added.

Il Manifesto chief editor Gabriele Polo branded the intelligence officer's death a "murder."

Calipari's body was repatriated late Saturday to Rome where his coffin was carried from a military plane amid full military honors at Ciampino airport.

He is to lie in state at the Vittoriano national monument Sunday and will be given a state funeral in Rome Monday.

Italian President Carlo Azeglio Ciampi and Pope John Paul II hailed the 51-year-old head of the Italian intelligence mission in Iraq as "a hero" who saved Sgrena's life.

"The most difficult moment was when I saw the person who saved my life die in my arms," said Sgrena after her return to Rome earlier Saturday.

Amid anger in Italy at the violent end to Sgrena's monthlong ordeal, US President George W. Bush promised a full investigation into the incident.

Berlusconi, a staunch Bush ally, told a press conference in Rome late Friday there were troubling questions that needed to be answered.

Meanwhile, about 100 anti-globalization protesters gathered outside the US Embassy here and called for a withdrawal of the 3,000 Italian troops from Iraq, Berlusconi's resignation and support for Calipari's family.

Sgrena, her left shoulder in a bandage, flew into Rome on a government plane Saturday morning and was immediately rushed to Celio military hospital where she will undergo surgery within the next few days. She had been given emergency treatment in a US military hospital in Baghdad. *AFP*

ITALIAN journalist Giuliana Sgrena disembarks with help from the plane which took her from Baghdad to Rome March 5. AP

No women's day in Saudi amid ultra-conservativism

By Ali Khalil

RIYADH—As women worldwide celebrate their international day, Saudi women continue to be subjected to strict restrictions in their ultra-conservative society, although some are becoming increasingly vocal in demanding freedom.

Women in the desert kingdom that sits on a quarter of world oil reserves are forced to cover from head to toe in public, are banned from driving, and cannot travel without a written permission from their male guardian.

In a rare gesture, a female member of the royal family slammed the ultra conservatives for being the cause of restrictions on women and called on the kingdom's government to confront them in order to empower women.

"They (government) have to confront them," Princess Sarah bint Talal said, referring to influential conservatives in Saudi Arabia.

"The government has to recognize us as an equal half of society ... This equal half has rights," Princess Sarah told AFP.

Such rights go beyond driving and voting to include equal rights in "court, (especially) in divorce cases, trade, and in making schooling for women obligatory in every village in the kingdom," she said.

The kingdom applies a strict form of Sunni Islam known as "Wahhabism," which follows the interpretations of the 18th century scholar Mohammad bin Abdul Wahhab.

The Arabian scholar and his followers are known to have played a pivotal role in the history of the kingdom, and acquired an almost free hand in running religious affairs.

But the outspoken princess believes that the government should have the ability to restrain conservatives.

"Change should be (through) a political decision," said Princess Sarah, daughter of maverick Prince Talal bin Abdul Aziz, a half-brother of King Fahd, whose outspoken views on democracy have clashed with other members of the Saudi royal family.

Although they were allowed to obtain separate identity cards a few years ago, women still need a male guardian to apply for the IDs on their behalf.

"I want to exist as a human being," Suzanne al-Ghanem, an executive director of a female-run NGO, protested.

Ghanem said she wants to be able to take decisions concerning her life by herself, including being able to rent a house or buy a car on her own.

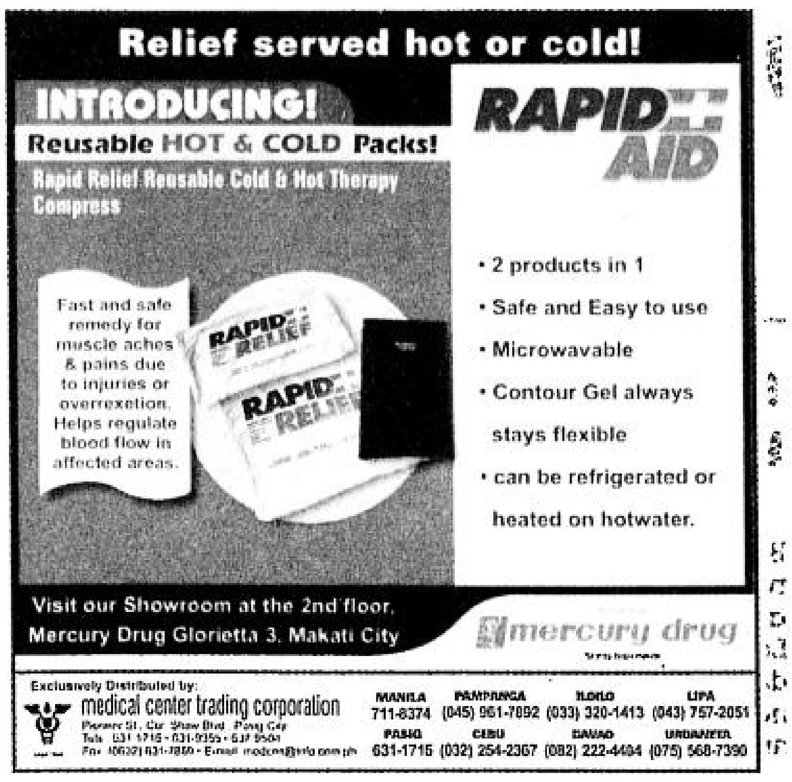
"I always have to follow someone (male relative) regardless of my age," Ghanem complained, adding that her 65-year-old grandmother was forced to accept her 18-year-old grandson as a male guardian, being the only male left in the family.

Ghanem used to celebrate women's day by getting together with other female friends but said she gave up as "nothing changed year after year."

In addition to historical restrictions, Saudi women have been barred from three-stage landmark municipal elections which kicked off last month. Logistical obstacles were cited as the cause by officials, who promised to facilitate female participation in the next elections.

But women who get their chance to complain do not hide their frustration about male domination.

"No matter how much a woman achieves in terms of education and work, and regardless of her age, there is always male guardianship," said Maha al-Munif, noting that she still needs her husband's permission to travel even though she is a department deputy head at a big local hospital. *AFP*



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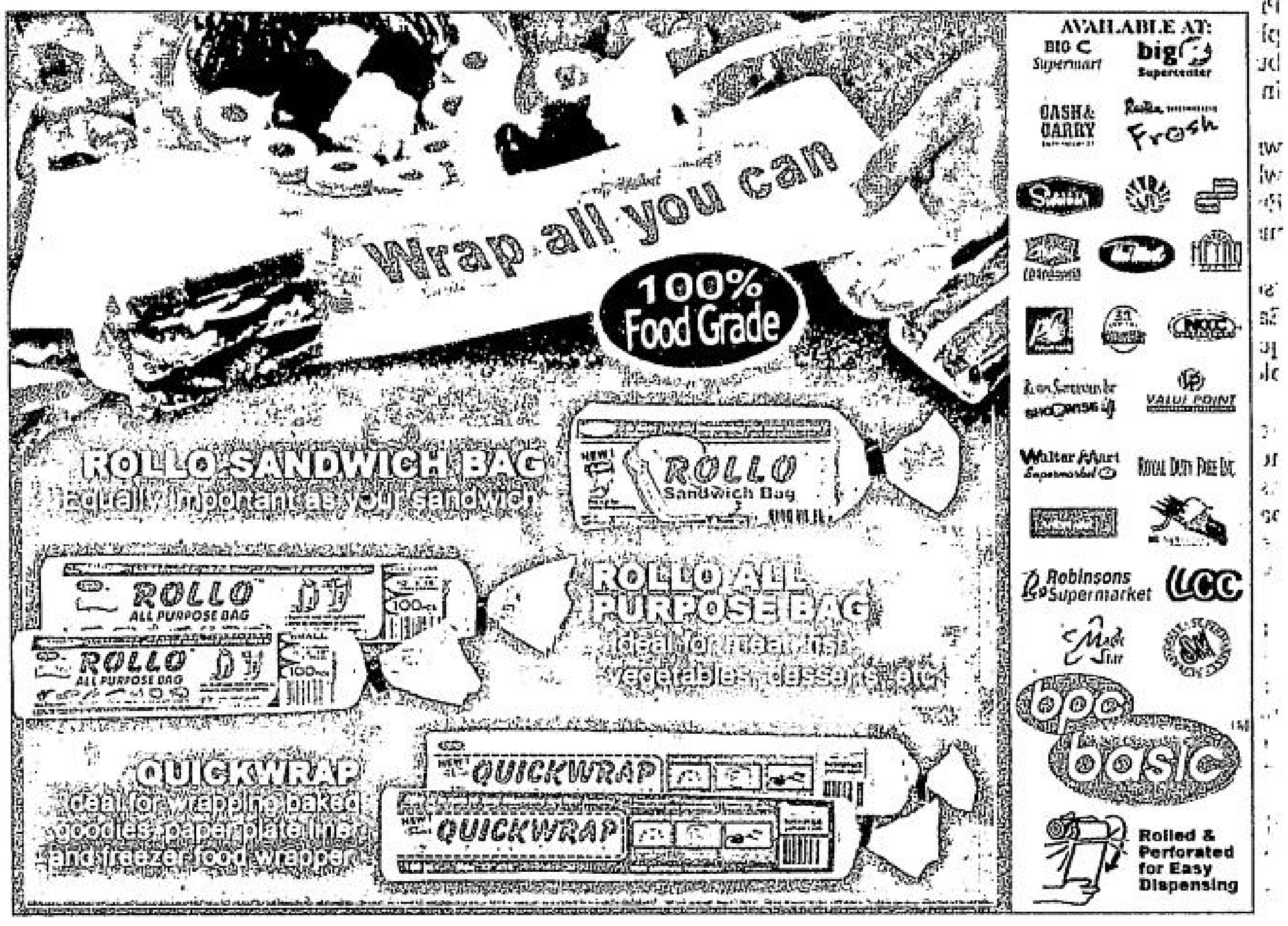

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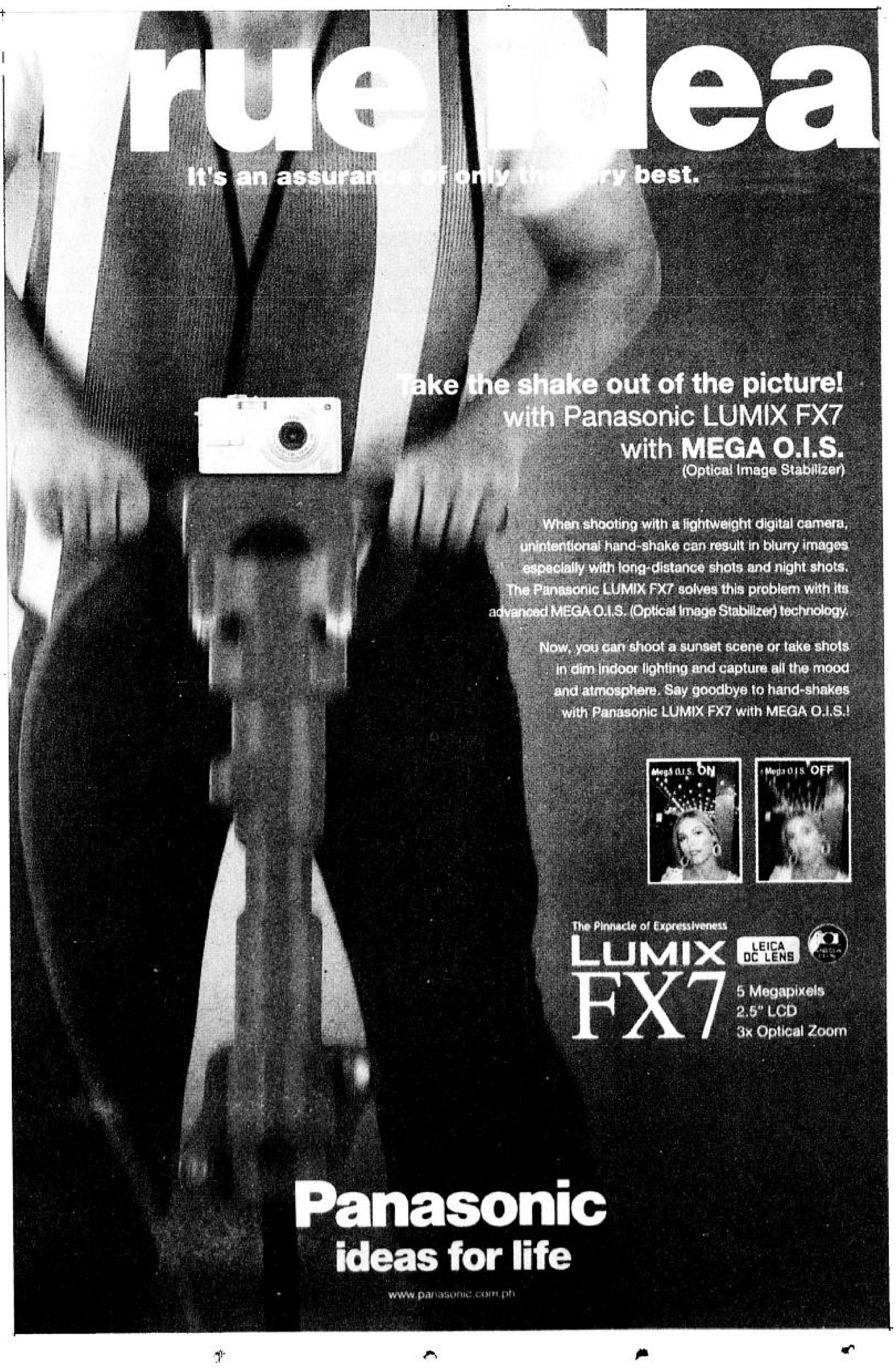

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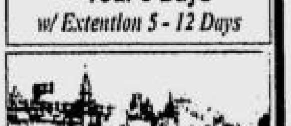

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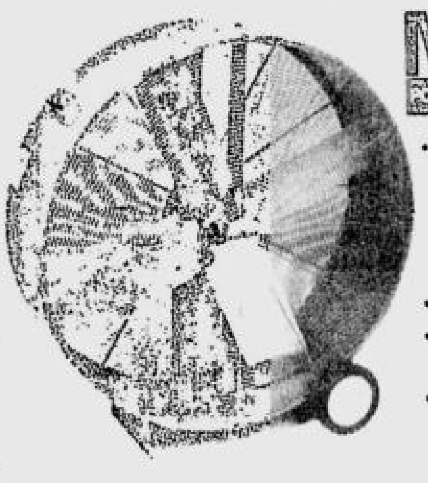

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Bush gave CIA authority to ship terror suspects abroad for interrogation–NYT

WASHINGTON—The Central Intelligence Agency has been implementing a secret program of transferring suspected terrorists to foreign countries for interrogation abroad under broad authority that has allowed it to act without case-by-case approval from the White House, State or Justice Departments, The New York Times reported on its website late Saturday.

Citing unnamed current and former government officials, the newspaper said the unusually expansive authority for the CIA to operate independently was provided by the White House under a still-classified directive signed by President George W. Bush within days of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

The process, known as rendition, has been central in the government's efforts to disrupt terrorism, the report said.

The rendition program has been under scrutiny in recent weeks after several former detainees have complained of inhumane treatment and human rights groups have complained the operations violated American standards condemning torture.

But a senior US official said that it had been aimed only at those suspected of knowing about terrorist operations, and emphasized that the CIA had gone to great lengths to ensure that they were detained under humane conditions and not tortured, according to The Times.

The paper quotes the official as saying the "CIA has existing authorities to lawfully conduct these operations."

The official agreed to discuss the program to rebut the assertions that the United States used the program to secretly send people to other countries for the purpose of torture, according to the report.

The transfers were portrayed as an alternative to what American officials have said is the costly, manpower-intensive process of housing them in the United States or in American-run facilities in other countries.

Human rights groups have accused the US government of subjecting several former detainees to coercive interrogation techniques and brutal treatment during months spent in detention under the program in Egypt and other countries.

The official would not discuss specific cases, but did not dispute that there had been instances in which prisoners were mistreated, The Times said. The official said none had died.

The official refused to say how many prisoners had been transferred as part of the program, the paper pointed out.

But former government officials say that since the Sept. 11 attacks, the CIA has flown between 100 and 150 suspected terrorists from one foreign country to another, including to Egypt, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Pakistan, according to the report.

A half a dozen current and former officials told the New York Times the Bush administration may have turned a blind eye to torture.

"I really wonder what they are doing, and I am no longer sure what I believe," one former senior government official was quoted as saying. *Reuters*

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a kiss during the closing ceremony of the 9th ssia's Siberian city of Krasnoyarsk, March 5. Miss will represent her home city in national and ts. REUTERS

Fear drives long flight to Kenya from Darfur

Bryson Hull

MA, I Kenya—Fear led iq Mohammed l Osman's two-year, km flight from Su- Darfur region to , but anger, he says, ing him home.

farmer never imag- enya, to where thou- of fellow Sudanese he south fled in a 21- vil war, would be his aste of safety after ders slaughtered f his village in a sep- conflict in western in November 2002.

by foot, plane, train, and donkey, Ahmed l friends and family rossed Sudan and ar- n Kakuma camp in vestern Kenya, the desert home to refugees from eight n countries.

rly 60 percent are Su- , but Ahmed's group up just over half of refugees in Kakuma he Darfur crisis that rted non-Arab rebels t Arab militias.

rly all the Sudanese in a fled the civil war in southern Sudan.

go back to Darfur, I ll the Arabs. If I had I would go. We have wen here," he said, g in front of his home n few weeks in Kaku- ree, the last built of mud-hut complexes p red-tinged sands.

did not want to come ya. We did not know about it," Ahmed said.

Terror sparked his flight in November 2002, when marauding militiamen known as Janjaweed torched his north Darfur village, Masmaji, killing his two brothers, his parents, three nieces and dozens of neighbors.

"They came at night and burned the houses and they went back and shot anyone who ran away from the fire. They took children around the back and shot them," he said.

Ahmed, his wife and three children were out in their sorghum fields when the raiders came, and they only returned to their razed, lifeless village two days later.

They fled for nearby Habila but, warned of impending Janjaweed attacks, they moved again.

"I decided to go to Chad, because it was near, but the Janjaweed cut the way," he said.

Their next stops were the larger Darfur towns of El Fasher and Nyala, but a few months in each with no fields to tend left the farmer in Ahmed frustrated, and his family hungry.

He bought train tickets for Khartoum, looking to go to its squalid squatter camps. Police at the train station had different ideas. Ordered to give his reasons for traveling, Ahmed replied that there was war at home.

"The security said 'That is not the truth. You must go back to Darfur.'" *Reuters*

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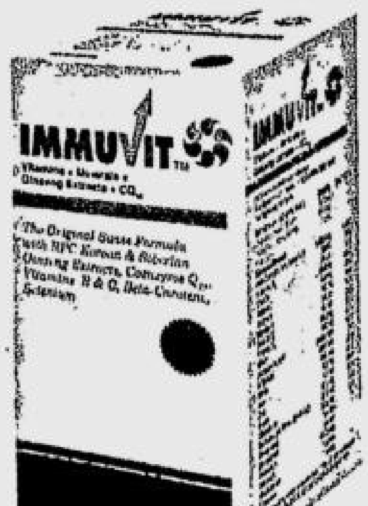

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ISSN 0116-2642
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THE PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER, INC. has its business and editorial offices at
•Chino Roces Ave corner Yague and Mascardo Sts., Makati City
•P.O. Box 2353 Makati Central Post Office 1263 Makati City
•Our telephone numbers are 897-8808 connecting all departments
•Editorial Fax 897-4793 / 897-4794 •Advertising 897-4807
•Circulation 527-3342 / 527-3348 / 528-0183 / 528-0186 and 528-0213 / Fax: 528-02-34.
100% soy ink

OPINION

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EDITORIALS

Corruption watch

IT IS a sign of how the promises of Edsa remain unrealized that in the last celebration of the 1986 revolution, there were calls for checking corruption and fostering accountability and transparency. The positive thing here is the recognition that the many-headed monster remains unvanquished. That a critical mass exists to fulfill the revolution's ideals, despite the disappointments and heartaches, shows the power of the historical memory that Edsa has engendered.

What is also positive is that even in the run-up to the 19th anniversary of the revolution, there had been efforts to systematize anti-corruption efforts. For example, the National Movement for Free Elections is working with the Department of Health to monitor the delivery and inventory of medicines to 75 DOH hospitals and 15 health centers. The program aims to prevent "ghost" delivery, under-delivery and overpricing of medicines.

The program repeats the formula that was applied in the Department of Education, in which the G-Watch of the Ateneo School of Government, Transparency and Accountability Network (TAN), Namfrel, Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts monitor and report the delivery of textbooks to public schools nationwide.

At the defense department, the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference, Procurement Watch and Makati Business Club (MBC) have banded together on the recruitment and training of volunteers who will act as observers in bidding and awards committees, to discourage corruption.

Meanwhile, the Center for Contextualized Theology and Applied Ethics of the University of Santo Tomas is training volunteers to monitor government procurements. UST has been asked by the Civil Society Observers, a group of NGOs and professional and academic organizations formed with some prodding from the Government Procurement Policy Board-Technical Support Office, to facilitate the formation of a procurement watch system. UST will train and form a pool of anti-corruption watchers through "values engineering," "empowering" them so that they would stay committed and alert despite the temptations posed by kickbacks and other inordinate offers.

All of these initiatives show that different sectors are coming together creatively in order to check corruption. If it is true that in 2001 the nation lost P95 billion through graft, then corruption is the most important cause of our poverty, and it is only right that all sectors deal with the monster single-mindedly and forcefully.

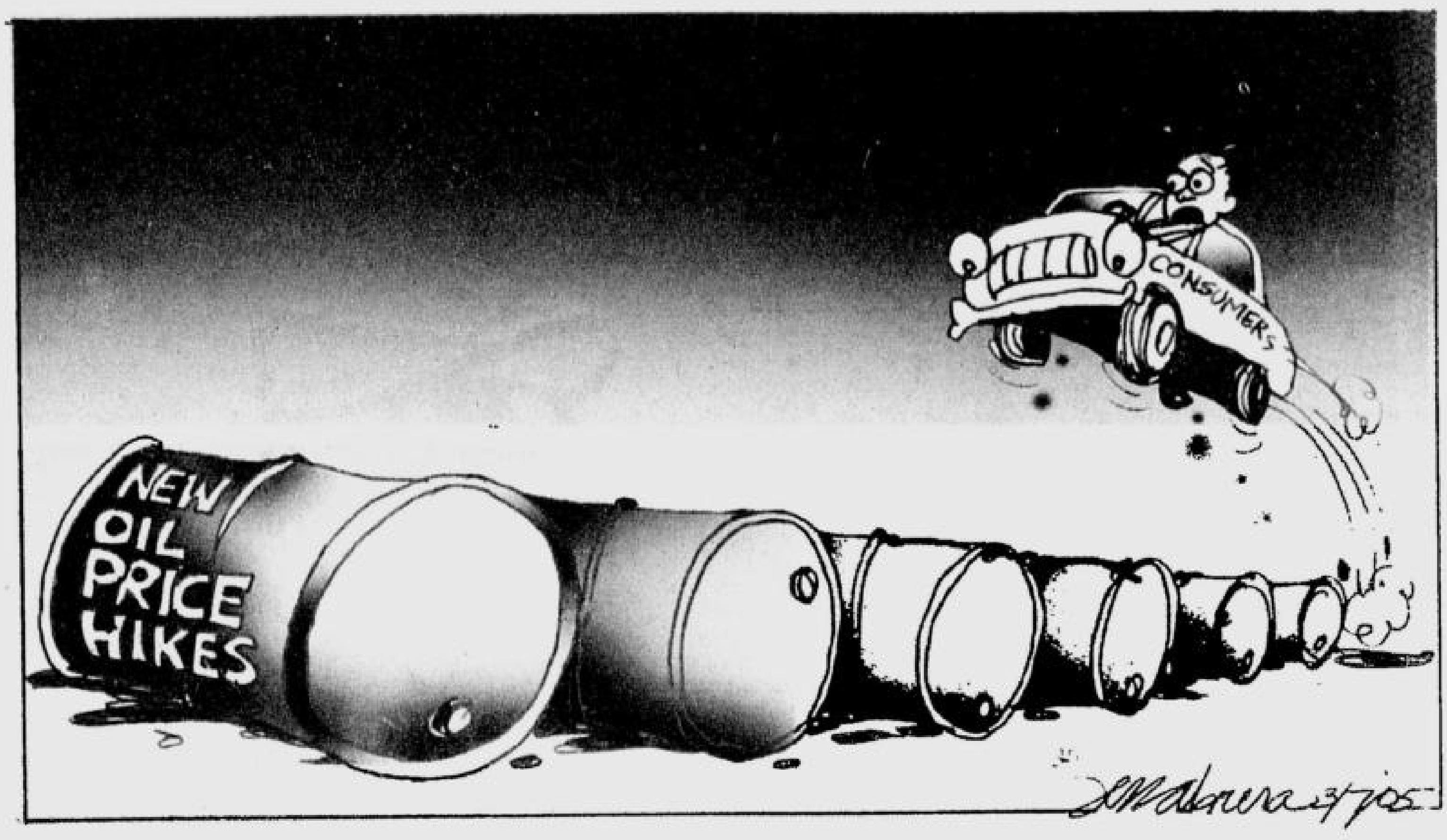
Challenge to business

BUT the "anti-corruptionists" can do something forcefully right at this moment without going through the tedious and risk-fraught conduct of monitoring—with lynx eyes—government procurement and bidding. Since many of the anti-graft initiatives are business-propelled, perhaps the businessmen could teach us a thing or two on stopping corruption. Perhaps, they themselves could stop corruption right at their doorstep.

A Social Weather Stations survey of 700 managers across the country shows most companies set aside 22 percent of the cost of a government contract for paying bribes. Only 21 percent of the companies surveyed keep one set of accounts. The rest, of course, keep two: one set of accounts for regulators, and the other for underground—or underworld—purposes.

Considering business' propensity to bribe its way through, then business' participation in anti-corruption drives is problematic. For example, the MBC is helping the Bureau of Internal Revenue to raise revenues by improving collections and the agency's internal system. Ditto with the Bureau of Customs, where the MBC and the TAN are helping stop smuggling and improving collection. Business' participation in both agencies is worrisome because businessmen don't pay the right taxes and tariffs, if they bother to pay at all.

Thus, the first determined move in any anti-corruption campaign is for business to make the resolve not to choose the easy way out. Perhaps, if the MBC and chambers of commerce would do so single-mindedly, then there would be no more need for watchdog systems. This might be wishful thinking, but it would be valid according to the Taoist philosophy of non-interference and letting things flow, of course, without artificial distortions. It would work also because of the Catholic principle of subsidiarity, in which everyone is expected to do his part according to his competence. Thus, if businessmen really want to get rid of corruption, they should do their part competently: pay the correct taxes and dues, refusing bribery and extortion.



Don't just cut pork barrel; totally abolish it

AS I SEE IT

Neal H. Cruz

I HEARTILY endorse the suggestion of Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago that all congressmen and senators commit mass suicide "as a service to the people." Yes, why not? After all, that's what they always say when campaigning for elective positions: they only want to serve. What better service can they give than to say goodbye to the people permanently? Santiago should immediately set the example. I propose, however, that three senators be exempted: Panfilo Lacson, Alfredo Lim and Franklin Drilon, who just saved the taxpayers P360 million by rejecting their pork barrel. We need more officials like them.

The exchange of accusations between the congressmen and senators over the recent passage of the 2005 national budget has exposed the trickery and deceit that legislators employ to steal money from the people. Several persons, still blissfully unaware of the knaves that their representatives are, have asked me what the quarrel is all about. In two dirty words, it's about "pork barrel."

For those who are still confused, this is what happened: Malacañang had submitted a proposed budget with the pork barrel reduced from P200 million to P120 million for each senator, and from P70 million to P40 million for each congressman. The House of Representatives passed this budget and sent it to the Senate. The Senate passed it *in toto* a few days ago. This infuriated the congressmen.

Why are they angry when the Senate passed the budget that they themselves approved? Because they had planned to restore the pork barrel to its original amount during the bicameral committee conference. Then, they'd pin the blame on the senators by claiming that the bill they passed had a reduced pork barrel budget. The alternate plan was to boycott the bicam committee meeting so that no new budget would be passed before the March 16 deadline. Under the law, when no new budget is passed after that date, the previous year's budget is automatically adopted—as what happened last year when the 2003 budget was adopted for the year 2004. That budget contains a higher allocation for pork barrel.

The senators got wise to this trick and hastily passed the budget earlier approved by the House, foiling the clever plot of the congressmen. The latter thought they were being smart but the senators outsmarted them. That's what made the congressmen furious.

In retaliation, they accused the senators of secretly restoring their own pork by realigning the intelligence funds of different agencies.

False, said Senate President Drilon last Saturday. What they did, he explained, was to identify which and where specific slices of the intelligence funds would be going—e.g., the witness protection program—so that auditing would be more accurate. If all were lumped together, any expense could be labeled "for intelligence" and that would be the end of it, he said. That makes graft, corruption and abuse easier to commit. In short, no part of the intelligence funds will go to their pork, Drilon said.

What the Senate should have done was to totally abolish the pork barrel, not just reduce it.

"I have no objection to that," Drilon said, reminding the journalists that he and two other senators (Lacson and Lim) have already rejected their pork and have told the budget department not to release them. Which means the three of them together have saved P360 million for the government. It is not likely that the representatives will do the same thing (they have less moral scruples), but in case any of them does, I suggest that we erect a statue for him or her at the Luneta.

Next year, Malacañang should have the guts to submit a proposed budget that has no allocation for pork. How can it ask the people to pay more in taxes when it allows members of Congress to waste tax money on such a corrupt expense as the pork barrel? Despite denials, everybody now knows that legislators cannot let go of the pork because part of it goes into their private pockets.

In the first place, it is not the job of legislators to usurp the functions of the Department of Public Works and Highways. Their job is to make laws, not to be another DPWH. Legislators legislate laws; the executive units—national and local—implement these laws. The Constitution is very clear on this.

Legislators claim they only identify projects for their districts and that none of the money passes through their hands. The money doesn't pass through their hands but parts of it end there—after (the contractors are paid and sometimes even before) and pass on the kickbacks.

Besides, if the legislators really want to, they can name their projects at the city, municipal, provincial and regional development councils of which they are members.

Let's face it, the legislators cling to the pork because it is a source of kickbacks and a source of votes. They say that their constituents go to them for projects and that if they don't endorse those projects, the credit and votes will go to the mayors and governors. But if they make it clear that their job is to make laws, not to usurp the job of the DPWH, the people will stop bothering them. They won't have to be tempted with kickbacks and they won't have to violate the Constitution by usurping executive functions. If Lacson, Lim and Drilon can do without their pork, why can't they?

* * *

Starting today and every Monday hereafter, the Front Page piano bar will feature celebrity cooks to whip up dishes for lunch for journalists and their guests. The first such cook is Rep. Imee Marcos. She will cook today popular Ilocano dishes, what else.

Goons and government

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

FOR once Miriam Defensor-Santiago made the sanest suggestion to improve this country's quality of life. That is for all the senators and congressmen to commit suicide.

She said this in the face of the House of Representatives' embittered excoriation of the Senate and anticipated acts of retaliation in the coming days. As the senators and congressmen were trading punches, Miriam suggested that it would be best if all of them just committed mass suicide. It would constitute "the best public service to the people."

I agree wholeheartedly, and would personally volunteer to assist in this noble task in every way possible, if they were to accept it like Japanese samurai after the shame of defeat. In aid of legislation: that would be thought to sustain me in helping to carry out that grim purpose.

Frankly, I can't understand why the legislators worry that this "squabble" would lead to a legislative impasse, or power crisis. That is the least of their worries. The first is what they are left with after looking like dogs snarling over scraps of meat.

Completely weirdly—*onli in da Pilipins*—the congressmen are bitter over the fact that the Senate approved the budget as **they** made it. The House budget calls for a pork barrel allocation of P40 million for each congressman and P120 million for each senator, down from P70 million and P200 million respectively. The congressmen made these reductions, not because they were struck by conscience but because they thought smugly they could get back the cutbacks when they met with the senators to reconcile their versions of the budget. That was how it went in the past.

Unfortunately for them, the Senate suddenly decided to break "tradition" and approve the House's version as submitted. At least, that is the Senate's story. The congressmen now say that is not completely true, the Senate did not approve their version in pristine form, it first tinkered with the intelligence fund to boost its own allocations by P1.3 billion **before** approving the House version. So now the congressmen are crying foul: the Senate did not just put one over them, it put two over them.

Is it possible the congressmen actually expect the public to show sympathy for their plight? Is it possible the senators actually expect the public to side with them? What is the issue here? Nothing more or less than how much of the taxpayers' money—**your** money, in case the fact escapes you—goes to each of them.

If this breathtaking farce proves anything, it does so two things.

The first is the opposite of what House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles proposes. He says the country "would be in a better state if it had a single parliament, with each member representing a clearly defined constituency." Nothing could be farther from the truth. That was already shown with dramatic force a couple of years ago when the House moved to impeach Hilario Davide on grounds of corruption.

At the very least, it was monumentally hypocritical in light of the congressmen's ferocious defense of the pork barrel, one of the biggest contributors to corruption in this country. While the pork barrel does not give the legislators the actual money allocated to them, it gives them the power to dispense that money. That guarantees very little of it will actually become roads and bridges and clinics. The pitfalls of the pork barrel are well known. The Church and other institutions have a point to call for it to be scrapped.

At the very most, it showed the monumental dangers—for this particular country—of a parliamentary system that reposed power in the hands of a unicameral body. That presumes the unicameral body will not act like a mob, a presumption the House has refuted repeatedly over the years, when it used its power to try to achieve the most wretched ends. Not the least of them trying to prevent their own—like Romeo Jalosjos and Mark Jimenez—from being brought to justice. And now to rake in as much loot as they can while the country grovels in misery.

A friend of mine is right: Don't they worry this spectacle goads taxpayers not to pay taxes?

The second thing this proves is that John Locke's proposition is perversely right for this country. Perversely because when he said "Government governs best that governs least," he meant that government shouldn't interfere too much with the natural course of life because that is best regulated by the private sector and the market. Here, that is true for a completely different reason. That is, the government does not pose a good to society, it threatens harm to it. The less government governs the less harm it wreaks.

That conclusion is inescapable. What astounds me, in particular, is the way government manages to reward, rather than punish itself for failure. Crime riots, and the PNP asks for more people and arms, and get them when crime riots precisely because they do nothing about it, other than commit it themselves. The countryside withers, and the congressmen ask for more Countryside Development Fund, also called pork barrel, and get it—when the countryside withers precisely because of the CDF. The country goes bankrupt and the President asks for close to a trillion pesos in budget, and gets it—when the country has gone bankrupt precisely because of her

I remember again what the Rabbi said in "Fiddler on the Roof" when asked if there was a proper blessing for the Czar. He replied, "Yes, there is: May God bless and keep the Czar—far away from us." We may invoke the same blessing upon our government.

I agree wholeheartedly with Miriam, but with a caveat. Why only senators and congressmen? A mass suicide of the executive and judiciary as well would cleanse this country more thoroughly than the Great Flood.

Remembering the Holocaust

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE MONTHS of congressional gridlock over the tax measures and the war of words between the Senate and the House of Representatives over the budget have convinced many citizens, more than ever, about the need to change our form of government. Many are now convinced that our country would be better served by a parliamentary and unicameral system rather than by a presidential and bicameral one.

But there are also citizens who totally agree with the proposal to abolish the entire Congress, though not through *hara-kirias* Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago suggested, but by some kind of people's fiat. The citizens are definitely getting quite disgusted with the antics of both chambers.

***

This is alarming, for it implies that many citizens are in favor of a dictatorship, which is what we will have without a legislature. In this regard, a dictatorship of the right seems to be the most probable—a prospect more frightening than a corrupt and inefficient legislature. At least, we can change the members of Congress through our vote; but the rulers in a military dictatorship can stay for a lifetime. This frightful thought should wake up the senators and representatives and inspire them to abandon their selfish motives and self-interests. They should start thinking of the country for a change.

***

The Sunday Times banner read: "GMA: Cha-Cha is next." The story said that once the fiscal conditions brighten up for the country with the passage of the revenue measures, the President will focus on charter change and the shift to a parliamentary and federal government. The problem is that President Macapagal-Arroyo has been dangling this idea like a yo-yo—as it suits her agenda. If she isn't convinced by now about the urgency of this shift (she felt the need to referee the quarrel between the two chambers), I don't know what else will convince her. We need her unwavering commitment to this idea, so it can finally take off. The current system has been a total failure in this country.

***

In our dzRH program last night, we discussed what is going on between the two chambers, not to cast aspersions but to look into the reasons that led to the problem and possible solutions. We invited former Senator and Isabela Rep. Heherson Alvarez, who, apart from his 15 years in Congress, had held three Cabinet positions in two administrations. Alvarez is unwaveringly for the parliamentary form. He feels it's more responsive than the presidential form, since the members of the Cabinet, led by the prime minister, are also members of the legislature who know the needs of their constituents; thus they can craft the proper laws. Moreover, he said, a parliamentary form is more accountable to the people since the Cabinet member-legislators can be questioned in the famous "Question Hour" every day, if necessary, about how revenues are spent, etc.

He asserted that the PM, who runs the day-to-day affairs of government, is not unlike the president/CEO of a corporation, who could be removed by the stockholders if they feel he's not doing his job well. He also noted that the "creative tension" that characterized the relationship between the two chambers in past eras is no longer present; both now seem parochial in their approach, unlike in the past when senators were more involved in policy-making and looked at the bigger picture. Hence, argued Alvarez, it's time to transform Congress into a unicameral body.

***

I totally agree. Had the parliamentary idea not lost in the 1986 Constitutional Commission by just one vote, this country would have gone much farther. Our laggard status in Asia is proof that our current system is not working. Incidentally, I note in Carmen Pedrosa's column that Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, who attended the inter-parliamentary meet with Speaker Jose de Venecia, is agreeable to a parliamentary shift so long as the single legislative body is called the Senate. Why not? JDV wants to call it, the "House of the Senate"?

***

Recently, we commemorated the 60th anniversary of significant events here, such as the liberation of Manila and of Los Baños, and the rescue of American POWs in the Cabanatuan concentration camp. Tomorrow evening, as a continuation of those events, the Israeli Embassy will stage a special theater presentation at the grand ballroom of the Intercontinental Hotel to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the liberation of the Nazi concentration camps in Europe. Last Jan. 24, the United Nations convened a special session to mark this event, as requested by 150 member-countries, among them, ours.

To observe this event and in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, the Israeli Embassy brings to Manila for the first time the Acco Theater Group to stage their award-winning play, "Anthology." It is acted out in the style of the "Fringe Theater," a relatively new form of alternative theater that "pushes the outer limits of the mainstream...where walls are broken down and boundaries as well as rules are almost done away with."

***

The play features the story of Holocaust survivor Zelma Greenwald (played by Smadar Yaaron), unfolding in a sala where she sings and accompanies herself on a grand piano, helping her to "untangle the jumble of emotions caused by the recollections of those dark years." The audience in this theater becomes Zelda's guests and as they sip cognac in her sala they listen to her and her neurotic son (played by Moni Yosef) talk about the sufferings in the concentration camp and the war.

"Anthology" is a legend in Israeli avant-garde theater and has been performed all over Europe, the United States and Asia. After its Makati debut, it will be shown in Cebu City on March 9 under the auspices of the Cebu Arts Council.

No longer unsung heroes

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Antonio J. Montalvan II

THE IDEA of archives may seem to have become obscure in the electronic world we live in today. Not to mention that its integrity has become suspect, thanks to Ricardo Manapat, a central figure in the alleged forgery of documents pertaining to the citizenship of the late Fernando Poe Jr. That was, perhaps, the only time that our archives drew the media spotlight, albeit for shadowy reasons.

The name "National Archives" has also joined the world of the "erstwhile" in Philippine government bureaucracy, where names of offices are constantly changed as if such alterations would logically wipe clean the sullied images of public entities. Although we still speak of a "National Archives," the office is now actually called "Records Management and Archives Office" and has been given the acronym ARMAO.

Archivists are usually perceived as antiquarians who work lonely hours in dusty, dark *bodegas*, filing papers that have become brittle with age. Antiquarians they are not. And it is not anymore always in dark bodegas where archival work is done but in modernized, usually automate laboratories. At least, for some of them.

Archivists are actually futurists. They toil not for the present but for the future. A hundred years from now, historians, researchers, government functionaries, election lawyers and ordinary citizens will be in need of documents and records, for purposes legitimate or otherwise. Those records will be an important link between the past and the future. Whether researchers or not, we will invariably need many of those documents from time to time. Archival work is thus no trivial matter.

Thanks to the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, archivists are now recognized as cultural workers and have been given a membership slot in an NCCA committee. Archival work is actually a very essential component of heritage conservation. It is a special field of cultural work undertaken by experts in the varied genre of scientific conservation.

Last week, I was exposed to the work being done by a professional organization of archivists in the country, the Society of Ecclesiastical Archivists of the Philippines (SEAP). From the name, one surmises that this is a group of Church archivists who shuffle documents such as baptismal records in parishes. That is certainly part of their task, but its membership also extends to church and non-sectarian schools. And it counts among its individual members archival experts from the House of Representatives, the ARMAO, and the University of the Philippines-Diliman, whose archivists are among the most sought-after resource persons in the field and are often invited for speaking engagements here and abroad. Its members are the crème de la crème of archivists in the Philippines.

My brush with the group was an eye-opener. For here you have specialists in paper conservation, photo conservation, files conservation, electronic records conservation, among others. Because of their expertise and their integrity as professionals, some of them have been entrusted by famous individuals and descendants of historical figures as repositories of important papers. They are also often consulted by private corporations that—I was surprised to know—need an archival system for their tons of paper records.

At the helm of the SEAP is the young and witty Dominican priest now stationed at the Manaoag Shrine in Pangasinan, Fr. Gaspar Sigaya. He recounted an incident, the death of a Dominican confrere, which suddenly created a scramble for the dead man's personal papers and records; only to highlight the need for archival work in his own congregation. With Father Sigaya is the noted canon lawyer from Mindanao, Msgr. Rey Monsanto of the Archdiocese of Cagayan de Oro, who has actually been serving the diocese as chancellor. Chancellor is a nice sounding name, but few people know that he is actually the chief archivist of a diocese. As such, it is the chancellor's efficiency at filing and conserving records that will spell the difference in the future in situations where supporting documents will be needed to resolve disputes over Church properties or for a person's canonization, among others.

But the work of archivists is not meant just to benefit scholarly research. Neither is it a matter of ecclesiastical praxis. Archivists benefit all of us no matter our station in life. They are our source of such mundane records as birth and death certificates, or marriage contracts. Come to think of it, all of us are archivists in one way or the other. We all have our little archive at home, our own pile of documents, though mostly misplaced or usually lying around somewhere in a jumble, thus almost always requiring a frantic search when there is need for any of them. It is the archivists who can tell us how to structure our files, using an easy locator system.

A few years back, the government embarked on an ambitious modernization work for the National Archives with funds from the government of Spain. The work, still in progress, includes the automation of its holdings, and the modernization of its conservation and safekeeping techniques. And the office will no longer be the historical nomad that it was, moving from one venue to another, from an ice plant to a kitchen prison, thrown into a state of disorder during the Japanese invasion of Manila, such that at one time, some documents were used as beddings by American soldiers. The ARMAO hopes to eventually have a building of its own, at the old Ayuntamiento in Intramuros.

Archival work is for the future generations and it elates us to know that archivists are slowly getting known and are no longer the unsung heroes that they were.

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Comments to monta@cu-cdo.edu.ph

Natural selection

THE LONG VIEW

Manuel L. Quezon III

YOU'VE seen it in the movies. Someone in a hurry walks into a bazaar (often oriental), asks a vendor how much something would cost, and is told its price. "Sold!" the person says and proceeds to hand over the payment.

The vendor suddenly gets very angry, "No! Aren't you going to bargain?"

The buyer, by now sweating profusely, blurts out, "Are you mad? I'm in a rush!" At which point, the vendor shakes his head and proceeds to force the buyer to at least go through the motions of bargaining.

From all accounts, this is precisely what happened when the Senate decided to adopt the national budget passed by the House of Representatives without any amendments. Some congressmen got furious and loudly protested the refusal of the Senate to haggle over the budget. Now, it may be true that money can't buy anything, but if the accounts are true, Sen. Manuel Villar's startling coup—he has been widely credited with the breathtaking idea of the Senate's simply adopting the budget *in toto*, leaving the House, so to speak, holding the bag—outraged many congressmen. In contrast, it drew a collective Buddha-like smile on the faces of the normally anxious senators.

Indeed, since 1998, when the traditional Senate of old finally morphed into the populist Senate of today (a process that began in the 1950s with the election of Rogelio de la Rosa: substantial institutional changes take generations to sink in), the House has increasingly become the more dynamic chamber of the legislature. Whether genuinely fresh or silly but novel, the House has had more luck when it came to putting up new ideas for debate. The Senate, on the other hand, instead of living up to its traditional role of putting forward more mature, nationally minded, and reformist legislation, has gone off in every direction that leads to television coverage but not much else.

This was a strange development, considering that the basis of local representation practically the world over is dynastic; while national representation usually fosters a high turnover of officials and favors the new over the old.

For a time, it seemed that instead of looking like a pool of exhausted genes, the country's provincial dynasties were producing top-rate fresh blood—never mind the tastelessness of both the press and these new wunderkinds of politics in using the term, "Spice Boys." And this new generation seemed to speak better, think better, and most of all—because it is the sine qua non of politics—communicate better. Unfortunately, with a few exceptions, the wunderkinds' surface sheen has been shown not to be reflective of inner brilliance.

Still, the House seemed more capable of organizing itself, in managing and manning the committees (where the real work is done), and in setting the legislative agenda and momentum of work. The Senate, on the hand, with the collapse of the old ways (a collapse due to the near-total fading away of the pre-martial law party system and the changing tastes of the electorate), put a premium on charisma over intelligence; and, with the influx of movie and media stars into its halls, kept "passing out" whenever work had to be done. And unlike the House—always a vast ocean of mediocres that allows islands of talent to break the surface and serve as natural reserves for efficiency and accomplishment—the Senate (with 22 to 24 bullfrogs all trying to croak simultaneously at any given time) was suffering from a paralysis due to a sudden drop in its collective IQ. (You know the joke: how many senators does it take to walk and chew gum at the same time?) It even seemed, also for a time, that the House had managed to sway public opinion to its side in the latest chapter of its generation-old vendetta to abolish the "Upper House."

The problem is, the House also finds every possible pretext to shoot itself in the foot. Its latest act of self-mutilation was the loud cry for "unicameralism," from its members who felt cheated by the sudden and unusual burst of energy coming from the Senate.

The manner by which the Senate turned the tables on the House demonstrates, yet again, the difference between a chamber with a national constituency, and one whose electorate is purely local. The difference lies in the use—and even abuse—of public opinion. Pit a congressman against a senator; and the senator will have the last say every time, because media will always go for one with a more national and even international allure. The congressman may have the wholehearted support of a constituency prepared to boo, hiss, lynch and murder anyone who displeases its leader. But what is that compared to a politician who has mobilized the vast and yet unquantifiable mass known as "the people"? What is a congressman with dynastic ties to a locality compared to an opponent whom every citizen, in every province, can claim the illusory satisfaction of "knowing"? Which may be why so few of the "Spice Boys" have successfully gone through the tricky evolution from local to national golden boy.

Whether the warm glow of its budgetary coup lingers or not, the Senate has once again demonstrated the reasons a bicameral system is so difficult to shake off. Even though Congress may be filled with unsavory types, it can (with its two chambers perpetually in war) at least still entertain—and even provide some benefits to—the public. After all, as we've seen all too often, there is no honor among thieves. Which is the only reason why the crooks get exposed in the first place.

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Comments welcome at www.quezon.ph

Remembering the past

READERS' ADVOCATE

Raul J. Palabrica

TIME is the best healer, so the saying goes. But, sometimes, there are hurts that linger in spite of the passage of the years.

Last Feb. 26, the newspaper's Junior Inquirer section featured made-in-Japan products, such as, cartoons, songs, origami (the Japanese art or process of folding squares of paper into representational shapes) and toys, that have gained popularity in our country. Aptly, the section's first page carried the head "Japanese Invasion."

By uncanny coincidence, a week before, the INQUIRER came out with a five-part series to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the sacking of Manila by Japanese military forces. The articles recounted the horrible experiences that several families suffered in the hands of Japanese soldiers as American troops advanced toward Manila.

A reader, Anthony de Sales of Sta. Ana, Manila felt very uncomfortable about the timing of that Junior Inquirer issue. Describing it as "a perfect example of journalism without proper research," he wrote: "Every February, the City of Manila commemorates the slaughter of more than 100,000 innocent civilians by remnants of the Japanese [occupation forces] defending Manila. The bloody carnage lasted from Feb. 3 to March 3 and left a big part of the city in ruins.

"I am a big fan of Japanese anime since I was a child (I grew up watching Japanese cartoons and playing with Japanese robots during the '70s), but your feature of Japanese pop culture could have been done in any other month of the year except February.

"We need to remember and respect the innocent victims of the Liberation of Manila and teach the next generation to always remember this sad part of our history."

Reading habit

I cannot fault the reader for finding last week's issue of the Junior Inquirer section untimely, coming out as it did at a time when the newspaper had just given full play to what many consider "the most vicious crime in Philippine history."

From the reader's perspective, it showed "disrespect" for the men and women who, 60 years ago, were at the receiving end of the bayonets and guns of the forefathers of the makers of those Japanese products.

Some things though have to be cleared up with regard to the section in question. As its name denotes, the section is geared toward the younger set of our society, in particular, those in the elementary and high school levels.

It aims to encourage them to read, and what better way to get them into that habit than by providing them with reading materials that relate to the things that interest them most at their age—such as cartoons, entertainment devices and fashion accessories.

Earlier studies have shown that children are usually attracted to comic strips in newspapers and magazines because of their colorful sketches and easy to understand dialogue. From there, they branch out to the different parts of the newspaper until the habit of reading becomes a part of their daily lives.

The same principle guides the Junior Inquirer section. With its colorful photos, articles written by young writers and other features that are "reader-friendly" to the 7-to-15-age bracket, the newspaper hopes to invigorate the reading habit among them.

Friendship Day

It is common knowledge that with the proliferation of TV shows, video games, movies and, lately, text and games in cell phones, many of our primary and secondary level students have lost interest in reading books, newspapers and other publications.

The "Japanese Invasion" issue that the reader complained about was prepared three weeks ahead, independent of the main section of the newspaper where the five-part series on the atrocities committed by Japanese soldiers came out.

It was a simple case of coincidence. There was no intention on the part of the section's staff to "belittle" the sufferings of the victims of the 1945 Manila holocaust.

The Japanese theme was chosen to mark the 18th anniversary of the Philippine-Japan Festival, an activity that celebrates the relationship between the two countries. For this year, the months of February and March were chosen as focal points to commemorate Jose Rizal's arrival in Yokohama, Japan in 1888. There he stayed for two months before going to Europe to push for reforms in the Spanish colonial administration.

One final word. While I believe that the past and its lessons should not be forgotten, it is equally important that we do not allow the past to burden us down as we meet the challenges of the present and the future.

Silent critic

Going to another subject matter, with the passing away last week of former Sandiganbayan Presiding Justice Francis Garchitorena, I lost a reader who went out of his way to call my attention whenever he felt a news report about the anti-graft court was inaccurate or misleading.

The role the court plays in the government's anti-graft campaign makes it a rich source of news and commentaries. The acquittal or conviction of a public official accused of a crime committed in relation to his office, especially if he or she is considered a "big fish" in the bureaucracy, often lands on the front pages of newspapers.

Garchitorena rang me to correct or clarify the news published in the INQUIRER about some of the court's decisions. He was particularly touchy about reports that erroneously paraphrased or interpreted the decisions, or speculated on the reasons for the reduction or increase of the penalties imposed on those found guilty of the crimes they were accused of. He was zealous in his desire to protect the court's image and reputation before the public.

The thing I liked most when he complained about what he considered as inaccurate reports was, he did it in a calm and composed manner. Like the methodical lawyer and justice that he was known to be in the legal circles, he enumerated the items in the news he took issue with and suggested how it should have been written to be fair to the affected parties.

He had a healthy respect for journalists. He understood the time constraints and other pressures they have to contend with in the performance of their duties and responsibilities. Not once did I hear him say or suggest something bad about the people who wrote or edited the reports that he felt were inaccurate.

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The readers' advocate may be reached at the following address: "The Readers' Advocate" c/o Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, Makati City. Or through fax nos. 897-4793 to 94, or readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

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New taxes meant to save gov't

THERE is no way the Filipino people can take on additional taxes without dying a little bit more. It is not a case of asking the people to give more to save the economy, but rather of deceiving them to save an inutile government that should have been kicked out yesterday.

The Philippine economy is on the brink of bankruptcy and President Macapagal-Arroyo and her economic kleptocrats cannot do anything about it. The fiscal crisis will continue for as long as the Philippine economy runs the course imposed by the globalization imperialists. Didn't Ms Arroyo herself admit in the past that too much liberalization hurts the economy?

A two-percentage point increase in value-added tax will actually translate into a 20-percent increase in the prices of basic commodities and services, not to mention professional services that are now also targeted in an expanded VAT coverage. Try as it might, Malacañang cannot hide the glaring fact that it is the end-consumers, the poor Filipino families, that will bear the brunt of the proposed tax measures. Thus, a family of six in Metro Manila, surviving on a minimum wage of P280, would again be forced to give up one-fifth of it (P56) to the government.

Other alternative revenue-generating schemes are obviously available, but these are ignored by the Arroyo government.

We urge the government to seriously rethink its mindless pursuit of bilateral free trade agreements. If the provision calling for the tariff elimination of select commodities under the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) would be approved, it is projected that the government would lose P16.9 billion in foregone revenues starting this year (P15.37 billion in potential Customs duties and P1.54 billion in VAT payments). We also demand a raise in the tariffs on imported products; some tariffs that were lifted due to World Trade Organization rules have resulted in foregone revenues of up to P21 billion in the last two years.

The VAT leakage from 1998-2002, if collected, would be more than enough to cover last year's budget deficit.

Indeed, the Philippine tax system remains oppressive and anti-poor, pampering foreign capitalists and the richest with five-year tax incentives (exemptions) while hitting hardest those who cannot afford to pay. Thus, we anticipate that the deceitful Senate deliberations on the proposed VAT hike will have just one concern in mind—how to pass the bill with the least opposition from the people.

We say no to the VAT increase!

We say no to additional taxes!

We say no to more sacrifices that are demanded from the people just to save the inutile US-Arroyo regime!

—MILLET MORANTE,
secretary general,
Kilusan para sa Pambansang
Demokrasya (KPD),
78C K6th St., Kamias, Quezon City

Also wondering about MNTC's franchise

I AGREE with the letter "What's the rate hike for?" (PDI, 2/22/05)

Where I live in Quezon City water distribution service is worse than when it was still delivered by Nawasa. I just don't know why the present government can't see that; or why the previous government awarded the contract. There is always rationing of water, and repair service is too slow. Its office personnel are even sometimes discourteous to customers. Even worse, the water rate and the increase thereon have been higher than the rate charged by Manila Water.

My friends living in areas serviced by Manila Water are very satisfied, I've never heard of one who has complained about that concessionaire's service. Cases like this always makes me wish that the west concessionaire could just take over the east side. It's very obvious that the Maynilad-type of management is far worse than that of the Ayalas who control Manila Water. Even a child can see this.

This is why I'm wondering why the government still awarded the North Luzon Expressway to the Manila North Tollways Corp., which is reportedly a sister company of Maynilad.

—STANLEY CHAN,
sc888ph@yahoo.com

IF you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Mascardo Streets, City of Makati or send a fax to Nos. 897-4793, 897-4794, or e-mail readersadvocate@ inquirer.com.ph

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

Abolish barangays

TO SAVE money, why not abolish barangays? The intellectual dishonesty, low intelligence and even lower morals of some barangay officials prove the failure of a system that was meant to train genuinely populist leaders at the grassroots level. Instead, they have become as devious as congressmen.

Before 1973, the barrios, later called "barangays," were merely territorial subdivisions of cities or towns. Originally, a barrio lieutenant was appointed by the municipality on basis of one's acknowledged leadership. He served for free and was non-partisan.

After the 1986 "revolution" and the restoration of city and town councils, there was no need for barangay councils. Unfortunately, the barangay, as conceived during martial law, has been carried over into the 1987 Constitution. Barangay projects, mostly financed from handouts of national politicians, consist mainly of barangay halls and basketball courts.

The other item that intrigues me is the poor quality of our voting system. In Canada, when a citizen pays income tax, he is given a voter's registration form which is needed to vote in the next elections. We should adopt this system so we can vote on the basis of issues and not on mere popularity.

We should save money and simplify our government.

—PN BELTRAN,
U 710 Prince Jun Condo,
42 Timog Ave.,
Kamuning, Quezon City

No violation by CAP

AS head of the government agency that regulated the pre-need industry, I graciously rejected sales offers of a college educational plan for a then newborn child, ostensively because I did not want to have a bias for any particular pre-need company, or a potential conflict-of-interest situation.

The debate today about how the pre-need industry should be regulated began more than 30 years ago, when the pre-need business was started. The Insurance Commission felt that pre-need was not insurance, while the Securities and Exchange Commission claimed that the products of pre-need companies were not securities in the traditional sense.

In 1982, this issue was resolved by the simple expediency of inserting in the law the phrase "pre-need plans" in the definition of securities. This clearly established the congressional intent that pre-need products are not to be regulated as insurance contracts, but rather as securities.

Without benefit of a legal framework of regulation, the SEC regulated the sale of pre-need plans on a trial-and-error basis. Surprisingly, it did a good job and developed pre-need into a multi-billion-peso industry under the system of full disclosure, surpassing the performance of the life insurance business in a span of less than 10 years.

An average of 60 percent of all premium payments (collected for educational plans) go to a trust fund while 40 percent go to commission payments and operational expenses of the company. This material information has not been concealed, as Sen. Mar Roxas and his allies would like the public to believe. Congress, in numerous committee hearings, was apprised of this fact and saw no need to change things. How the trust fund is invested and the proper mix of such investment to ensure liquidity and safety are publicly disclosed and governed by rules that are closely monitored by the regulator.

No violation has been cited against College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. (CAP) in this regard. In fact, a commercial bank, duly accredited by the SEC, undertakes the management and investment of the trust fund under rules that strictly prohibit interference from the pre-need company. This is how the business successfully worked for years—without fail—in assuring the future of hundreds of thousands of families.

Over-regulation, proceeding from the premise that pre-need products reeks of a scam, will kill a legitimate Filipino enterprise and will not serve the interests of existing planholders. Furthermore, any statement or action of biased politicians, which interferes with SEC's investigative power or preempts its regulatory initiatives for the protection of the public and the development of the industry, is grossly irresponsible.

Unquestionably, there is urgent need for Congress to enact a code—to set a clear policy and a system to ensure that every company will be not only financially healthy and operationally capable, but also honest and trustworthy.

—PERFECTO R. YASAY JR.,
former SEC chair,
22/F The Corporate Center,
139 Valero St.,
Salcedo Village, Makati City

'Jueteng' unstoppable

I COULD not help but laugh in disbelief every time I read about attempts to stop this illegal numbers game called *jueteng*. ("Church, solon join campaign vs jueteng," PDI, 2/11/05)

Like the oldest profession (prostitution), *jueteng* has become a way of life with every gambling Filipino, especially those in far-flung provinces where the source of livelihood depends largely on whether one can go fishing on a clear day, or planting or farming on other days, for a measly income. After which, when there's nothing more to do, he/she resorts to *jueteng* as the fastest alternative to try to improve a miserable hand-to-mouth existence. The important thing is that without sweat and with only a piece of paper and pencil in hand as investment, *jueteng* aficionados find an opportunity to earn badly needed additional income.

Today, it's not anymore surprising to see out-of-school youths or even elementary and high school students—not to mention dropouts—deeply hooked on *jueteng* as bet collectors mainly because the job provides a ready source of money for their school and other personal needs, not to mention the plateful of rice on the family table.

All past and present local government secretaries have failed to stop *jueteng*. More, including the incumbent, are bound to fail in their efforts to completely eradicate it. There's no way our government, or anybody else for that matter, can.

Even the idea of making nationwide the operation of the now very popular lotto, in the false hope that lotto could "kill" *jueteng*, will go nowhere.

Whether or not *jueteng* is a gold mine for people in authority who, in return, protect its operations and operators is no longer an issue. The fact is, *jueteng* has already become part of people's lives and traditions in many places. Come hell or high water, it will stay or always make a come back.

Legalize it? Come on, man, that's another story.

—VIC F. ALIANZA,
1 Zinnia St.,
Perpetual Village 7,
Barangay Mambog 5,
Bacoor, Cavite

Do not blame Tarongoy, OFWs

WHILE the whole nation continues to pray for the release of Roberto Tarongoy who was kidnapped in Iraq months back, the last thing we'd want is to put the blame on the victim himself.

We respect Ramon Tulfo's view that "the Macapagal-Arroyo government should never give in to the demands of Tarongoy's kidnappers," (PDI, 2/24/05) but blaming Tarongoy for the predicament he and his family is in is the last thing they need. In the first place, Tarongoy and many other overseas Filipino workers would not have accepted dangerous jobs in war-torn countries if the economic situation in the Philippines were not desperate.

While it is true that Filipino workers have been warned not to accept job offers in Iraq after the Angelo de la Cruz abduction, government has not offered viable alternatives (such as stable and well-paying job opportunities here in the country) to people desperately looking for means to survive.

The only preventive measure that the Arroyo administration has adopted is the ban on deployment to Iraq. But records from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration show that the ban is more honored in breach than in deed. In 2002, before the war in Iraq, only 50 OFWs were in Iraq. In 2003, their number rose to around 1,500 for an astounding 2,880 percent increase! Today, they number a little over 6,057. The ban is technically a government hoax.

Recruitment officials themselves have said in various news reports that hundreds of workers enter Iraq indirectly, just like Tarongoy did.

While it may also be a valid option—though unlikely—for President Macapagal-Arroyo to pressure the Saudi Arabian Trading and Construction Co. Ltd., (Tarongoy's employer), to pay the kidnapper's ransom demand, Tulfo needs to realize that it is the moral and prime responsibility of the Philippine government to help and protect Filipino citizens wherever they are.

Yes, we agree with Tulfo, Tarongoy's recruitment agency, JS Contractor Inc., and the People's General Insurance Corp. can be blamed and prosecuted for Tarongoy's deployment in defiance of the so-called government deployment ban to Iraq. But the biggest fault lies with the Philippine government. It is responsible to each and every OFW whether regularly or irregularly deployed.

Aside from punishing recruitment agencies that defy the so-called deployment ban, the government should file administrative and criminal charges against the labor officials responsible for the deployment of OFWs to Iraq, and ensure that the proper penalties are meted out to them.

Until the authorities will not provide the best option—creating stable, decent and well-paying jobs in the country—the fate of Tarongoy and all OFWs in distress in foreign lands should be blamed on the government itself.

—CONNIE BRAGAS-REGALADO,
chair, Migrante Sectoral Party,
115-B Kamuning Rd., QC

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Zambales vice gov gets zero budget

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Not even a single centavo. That, according to Zambales Vice Gov. Ramon Lacbain II, is the state of his office's coffers this year, making him perhaps the first elected official in the country without a budget.

The zero budget, Lacbain said, was the latest ugly turn in the ongoing feud between him and Gov. Vicente Magsaysay.

Magsaysay, Lacbain said, "totally removed" the P3-million budget of his office in 2004. The vice governor was reelected to a second term.

In contrast, he said, Magsaysay's office was allotted P75 million for operations and another P20 million for capital outlay. The latter was incorporated in the budget of the provincial engineer's office.

"What Governor Magsaysay wants is I will just ask from him for whatever I need in my office. It is only in Zambales that a vice governor has no budget of his own. What is even worse is [Magsaysay] wants [me] to personally ask for his signature for my vouchers and checks," Lacbain said in a statement.

Magsaysay, in a telephone interview, denied having any hand in the budget appropriations. It was the provincial board, he said, that approved the budget.

He declined to answer other questions and asked that other statements he made during the interview be put off the record.

Lacbain, the presiding officer of the provincial board, said it was Katherine Fan, the board's secretary, whom Magsaysay ordered to prepare the budget.

The League of Vice Governors of the Philippines, in a March 1 resolution, asked President Macapagal-Arroyo to investigate the supposed move of Magsaysay.

"I hope President Arroyo can free me from this irregular situation. I cannot perform my functions well as vice governor," said Lacbain.

He said Magsaysay stripped him of funds to diminish his chances in the 2007 elections. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Deployment of armored personnel carrier assailed

TACLOBAN CITY—An official of a human rights group in Eastern Visayas has decried the deployment of an armored personnel carrier (APC) outside the office of Bayan Muna in Northern Samar.

Alex Lagunzad, regional secretary general of the Katungod-Eastern Visayas, an affiliate of Bayan Muna, said the APC had been positioned outside the compound of the building since 11 a.m. yesterday.

Bayan Muna-Northern Samar shares the office in Barangay Cawayan in Catarman town proper with Katungod and other human rights groups in the province.

"This is another harassment initiated by the military against our group. We call on them to leave the area and stop this [harassment] directed at our group," Lagunzad said.

The vehicle belongs to the Army's 63rd Infantry Battalion, under the command of Col. Manuelito Uzi and based in Barangay Opong, Catubig, also in Northern Samar, said Lagunzad, citing the information he received from Leomar Orsolino, chair of Bayan Muna-Northern Samar.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to reach Uzi through his cellular phone.

Lagunzad said Orsolino had told him that the military officers claimed that a New People's Army (NPA) member was hiding inside the office, prompting them to deploy the APC in front of the office.

"Of course, their allegation was not true. No NPA member [was] hiding there," Lagunzad said, adding that the military men were just using this ploy to harass them.

He said only five persons were in the office, all of them members of Bayan Muna.

As of 2 p.m. yesterday, the APC was still in front of the office, Lagunzad said.

It was not the first time that the military had allegedly harassed them, he said. Last year, he claimed, military men tried but failed to enter the office, purportedly to capture an NPA member hiding there. *Joey Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau*

K-9 dog finds bomb

TACURONG CITY—A bomb-sniffing dog prevented what could have been a blood Saturday in a public market here when it found a live apple-type grenade in a bundle of used clothing.

Col. Gerry Jalandoni, 604th Infantry Brigade chief, said the K-9 dog named "Volvo" was so restless when it approached several bundles of used clothing at the city's public market at around 4 p.m. Saturday.

"After sniffing it, Volvo sat on it," he said. Last week, military agents prevented a bombing attempt after it defused a live 60mm ammunition left unattended inside a snack bar here. "Volvo" was also instrumental in the discovery of the explosives, Jalandoni said. *Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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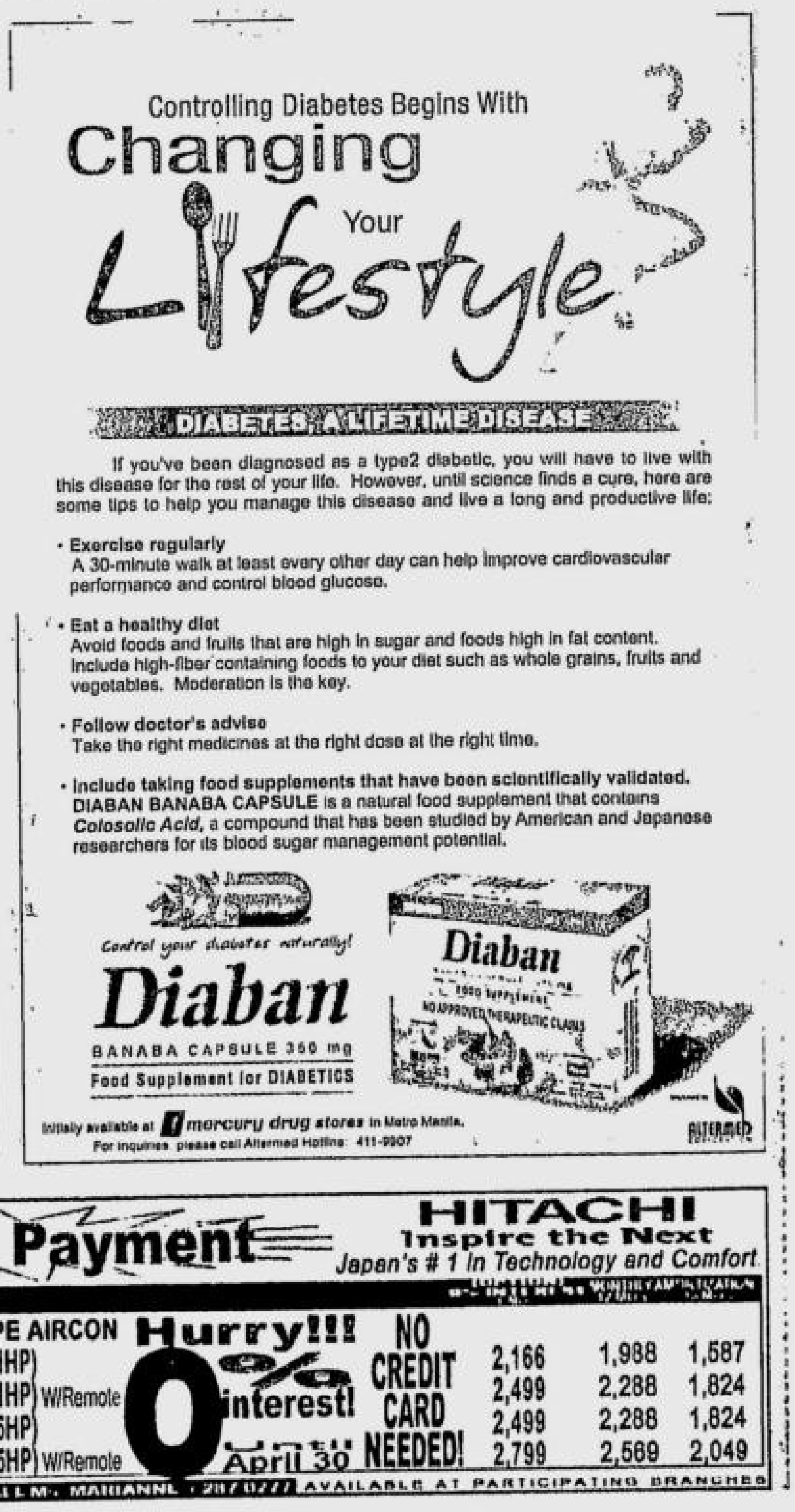
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Tribal folk plead against mining

BOAC, Marinduque—After their exposure trip to devastated mining sites here, listening to stories and presented with various information on the mining issue in the country, indigenous peoples pleaded for help so that Malacañang would listen to their stand against mining.

"There is more harm than benefit in mining operations," they reiterated during the first national grassroots conference on mining held here recently.

"The minerals to be exploited are not in Malacañang or in the DENR (Department of Environment and Natural Resources) but in our lands; we are the ones directly affected," was Subanon leader Timuay Jose Anoy's most applauded statement.

Anoy recalled that the operations of a Canadian mining firm in Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte, which started mining in 1987, was so noisy they could not perform their rituals as the company operated 24 hours a day.

He said the indigenous peoples are not against development but mining has destroyed the environment, culture and livelihood. "It's not our practice to mine because our ancestral land is sacred.. we were not properly consulted, we objected," he claimed.

In Mindoro, thousands of Mangyans await their ancestral domain titles, but one of their areas covering more than 12,000 hectares, is a mining site in Villa Cerveza, Victoria, said Karen Ignacio, officer of the National Commission for Indigenous Peoples-Oriental Mindoro.

Ponyong Kadlos, leader of the Kapulungan para sa Lupaing Ninuno, related how a Mangyan child got sick and died one month after bathing in a polluted river.

"Also during mining exploration, an Alangan Mangyan woman, who was hunting for food, fell into the pit left uncovered by the company. We have information that other pits remain uncovered," he said.

"We appeal to Malacañang. Isn't our life as important as yours?" Kadlos asked.

Kadlos said Mangyans followed a long process of community consultation, mindful of their ancestors and spirits in the environment.

Benjamin Philip Romualdez, Chamber of Mines of the Philippines (CMP) president, had earlier declared the commitment of the mining sector to respect and protect the interest of the tribal peoples.

Romualdez, also the president and chief executive officer of mining giant Benguet Corp., urged participants in a forum last year to hold continuous meetings, especially between the leaders of the country's tribal peoples and the mining sector as he promised to maintain close relationship with the indigenous peoples. *Madonna T. Virola, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

KAAMULAN FESTIVAL GRACE CANTAL-ALBASIN
Mothers, who never fail to attend the Kaamulan Festival as part of their thanksgiving for a bountiful harvest, have to carry their little ones during the street festivities in Malaybalay City on Saturday.

Despite funding woes, Bukidnon folk go on with Kaamulan Festival

MALAYBALAY CITY—The government's austerity measure did not dampen the celebration of the Kaamulan Festival in Bukidnon on Saturday, officials claimed.

Only six of the 20 towns joined the thanksgiving event. These are Libona, Sumilao, Baungon, Lantapan, Maramag and Don Carlos and the cities of Valencia and Malaybalay.

The local governments spent between P300,000 and P500,000 in mobilizing contingents to participate in the festivities.

The provincial government allotted only P2 million, compared to last year's P3 million. This year, it relied mainly on the P1.4-million in donations from big companies, such as Globe Telecommunications and San Miguel Corp.

Raymond Gamboa, a councilor of Kalilangan town, told the INQUIRER that last year that they spent about P400,000 for the festival.

"We'd rather spend it for priority projects this year," he said.

With fewer people participating, the street dancing and the tableau presentation ended earlier than in previous stagings.

Gov. Jose Ma. Zubiri was in high spirits as he saw about 50 foreigners enjoying and even dancing to the beat of indigenous music played by each contingent.

"For the first time, I am happy to see more foreigners visiting us. I figured there would be more next time. "The other towns may not have participated this year, which is understandable due to the fiscal crisis we are facing," Zubiri added. *Grace C. Albasin, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Sectors boost tree planting drive by mining company

TAMPAKAN, South Cotabato—A tree planting drive spearheaded by a mining company got a boost on Friday when about 60 representatives from various sectors pledged support for it.

The project, dubbed "Maleh To Kayu," a B'laan phrase for "let us plant," aims to reforest 500 hectares of denuded areas at the town's forest site.

Illegal cutting of trees and unabated slash-and-burn farming have become serious reduced the local forest cover over the years.

On Jan. 24, Sagittarius Mines Inc. (SMI) partnered with the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Central Mindanao and the Socsksargen Multi-Sectoral Coalition for Sustainable Mineral Development for the project.

The program aims to reforest the areas within the SMI area, which used to belong to Australian firm Western Mining Corp. (WMC).

A memorandum of undertaking for the implementation of the Maleh To Kayu program was signed during a summit here Friday.

The project proponents and representatives said they would plant about 250,000 seedlings of various tree species in five years.

Among those who attended the summit were representatives from the DENR-Central Mindanao; provincial governments of South Cotabato, Davao del Sur and Sultan Kudarat; the municipalities of Tampakan, Columbio and Kiblawan; barangay and tribal councils within the Tampakan project, SMI officials, government agencies and nongovernment organizations.

Jerry Balaut, community environment and natural resources officer, said slash-and-burn farming should be stopped to preserve the remaining forest in the area. *Aquiles Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Farmer gets death for rape of daughter

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Visayas Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—A farmer from Candoni, Negros Occidental was meted the death penalty on Thursday for raping his 14-year-old daughter.

Kabankalan Regional Trial Court Judge Henry Arles found the 48-year-old farmer guilty of raping his daughter in 1999 and ordered that he be immediately remitted to the national penitentiary.

The court also ordered the farmer to pay his daughter P75,000 indemnity, P50,000 for moral damages, and P25,000 for exemplary damages.

The victim said she was raped inside their house in Candoni on Sept. 2, 1999 while her mother was away. Her father warned her not tell anybody what happened or he would kill them all, she said.

The child, however, told her mother about it and lodged a complaint in December 1999.

The court said the complainant would not have filed the charge if it were not true, the judge said.

"No daughter will charge a father, especially a good father, with rape. The charges are not only embarrassing to the victim but to the family as well. It means death to the head of the family," the judge said.

"A father so charged cannot exculpate himself by a bare-bone denial."

The judge also noted that the accused failed to come up with a plausible explanation why his daughter and wife would impute a heinous crime upon him.

"No mother would consider subjecting her daughter to the shame of a public trial for rape that would result in the incarceration of the father of her children for the rest of his life if she was not motivated solely by the desire to have the person apprehended and punished," the judge added.

The victim's failure to immediately divulge what happened to her was not contrary to normal human behavior, the judge said. "In many instances, rape victims simply suffer in silence."

The court also stressed that rape was a crime revolting to conscience and when committed by a father against his own daughter, it evoked indignation, revulsion and the disgusting feeling that morality has gone wrong.

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Snakes, owls antidotes to rats during El Niño, says agri exec

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Spare the snakes and owls this time.

These animals are the natural antidotes to rats that are expected to feast on rice, corn and vegetables when the drought accompanying the El Niño weather disturbance hits the country this year, said Dominador Canlas, crop protection coordinator of the Department of Agriculture in Central Luzon.

Canlas gave the advice to hunters as rodents last week attacked at least 33 hectares of *palay* in Mexico town, east of here.

Romeo Razon, municipal agriculturist, said in a report that rats damaged 377 cavans of rice ready for harvest in at least 631 hectares of riceland in the villages of San Jose Malino, Camuning, Divisoria, Cawayan, Culubasa, San Rafael and Anao.

"[But] the rat infestation is not yet occurring in disaster proportions," Canlas said.

While no similar incident has been monitored in other parts of Pampanga or Central Luzon, the situation in Mexico may signal a repeat of what happened during the 1998 El Niño, he said.

That year, he said, rats destroyed about 8,000 hectares of farmlands in Pampanga and Bulacan towns near the Pampanga River.

Canlas said the rodents, growing to less than a foot in size, are known to leave their burrows during extremely hot months. It is during the wet season that they are known to breed.

Known to shift habitats in farms starting January, they ruin *palay* and corn by cutting the stems to reach the stalks and munch on the grains.

Rat infestation, Canlas said, had been a constant problem since 1998, requiring the DA to spend more on flame throwers and rodent poison.

However, farmers find these methods to be not very efficient and resort to electrocuting the rats by installing live wire around the plots.

This is dangerous to humans, said Canlas.

Mayor Teddy Tumang said the municipal government had yet to decide whether to poison the rats.

"We should first hear the opinions of experts in this problem. We will also find out if it would be feasible to poison the rats, considering that some of our province mates eat them," Tumang said.

"The best way to reduce the rat population is through their natural predators, such as the Philippine cobra, snakes and owls," Canlas said.

Rogelio Trinidad, chief of the protected wildlife sector of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in Central Luzon, said cobras and other snake varieties and owls are still abundant in the region.

But these, he said, are much sought after by hunters either as exotic food or pets.

Some farmers catch and cook the rodents to reduce their population.

For best rat control, Canlas said farmers, as early as during land preparations for the next planting season, should start clearing well their plots, detecting and destroying the burrows.

Tonette Orejas with a report from Jun Malig, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Bus falls into ravine; 1 dead, 44 hurt

PAGBILAO, Quezon—A Manila-bound bus fell into a 30-foot ravine while negotiating a sharp and slippery curve in Sitio Sapinit, Barangay Silangang Malicboy in this town past midnight on Saturday, killing a 5-year-old boy and injuring 44 others.

Police identified the victim as Aaron Lucero, of San Isidro, Northern Samar.

He was thrown out of the MR II Princess bus, bearing plate No. NYJ 813 as it plunged into the dark gorge.

The injured were rushed to the Jane County Hospital here.

A police report said the unidentified driver of the bus, which came from Catbalogan, Samar, lost control of the vehicle on a curve along the diversion road. The bus slammed a narra tree, it said.

The slight drizzle made the uphill road slippery. As it swerved, police said, the bus also hit a passenger bus parked on the shoulder before it rolled into to the ravine.

The passengers said their vehicle was overspeeding.

"We were shouting to the bus driver to slow down but he ignored us. He still continued with his speed driving," said Lorna Federico, who rode in the bus in Sorsogon with her husband Rodrigo, who suffered broken ribs.

Police said the driver escaped after the incident. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Starfish destroying coral reefs in S. Leyte alarms gov

By Jani Arnaiz
PDI Visayas Bureau

MAASIN CITY—The provincial government has sought the help of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources and Coast Guard divers to stem an outbreak of crown-of-thorns starfish that have been eating up the coral reefs off the historical island of Limasawa.

Gov. Rosette Lerias said the problem should be addressed immediately since the affected areas had two dive sites, Gunther's Wall and Adrian's Cove, two of the best coral reefs in the Sogod Bay area and Southern Leyte's top tourist attractions.

The coral reefs are considered among the best in the world by the Coral Cay Foundation, a United Kingdom-based marine expedition studying the coral reefs at Sogod Bay area.

The outbreak of crown-of-thorns starfish has already damaged at least ten hectares of coral reefs surrounding the Limasawa Island and has threatened to gobble up other coral reefs in the area if not taken out from the sea, according to Neil Pretencio, provincial fishery warden.

Overfishing

He said the presence of the starfish, locally known as *dap-ag*, might be attributed to overfishing. Its known predators, such as the titan triggerfish, titan trumpet shellfish and napoleon wrasse, have already vanished due to overfishing, he said.

Pollution is also blamed for the presence of the starfish, which can grow to over one foot long.

Limawasa Island is famous for being the site of the First Christian Mass held on Philippine soil by Portuguese explorer Ferdinand Magellan's chaplain Fr. Pedro de Valderrama on March 31, 1521. The site of the First Mass has been declared a national shrine since 1960.

The 6-square-kilometer Limasawa Island, equally famous for its many caves and dive sites, has also been declared a tourist zone in 1994.

Andrew Guerin, project scientist of the Coral Cay, told the INQUIRER that the crown-of-thorns starfish could eat up the remaining coral reefs in the bay if not collected.

"There are tens of thousands of starfish that are feasting on the coral reefs. We would not know the extent of the damage but it would be huge if we are not going to clean it up soon," Guerin said.

More divers needed

He said that on a day's operation alone, they were able to pick up around 5,000 starfish. "Although dive shop operators are helping us, we still need more divers and equipment to get rid of the crown-of-thorns starfish."

The crown-of-thorns starfish is somewhat sinister in appearance as it is covered by a large number of long, very sharp spines (4-5 cm long) that can inflict a painful wound. This species is multicolored and its color varies from purplish-blue with red tipped spines to green with yellow-tipped spines.

Dive sites in the Sogod Bay area, which have more than 300 species of coral reefs, are the No. 1 tourist come-ons in the province.

Guerin said it would be not easy to pluck the starfish because its thorns are highly poisonous. A wound caused by the starfish would normally take six months to heal, he added.

He said a big portion of the corals lying from 6 meters to 60 meters deep (beyond the diving limit) in the southeast section off Limasawa had already been damaged.

Guerin added that the starfish multiplied rapidly and each of them could eat up 5 meters of corals a day. "With its sheer numbers, it's difficult to get rid of them," he said.

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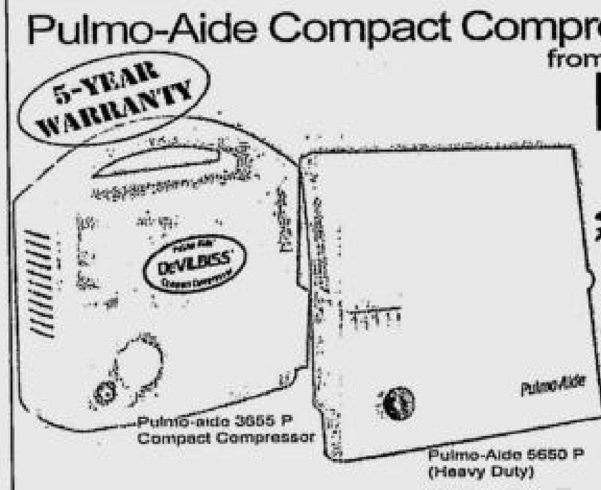
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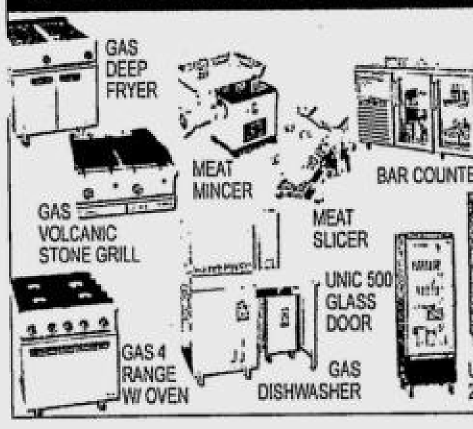

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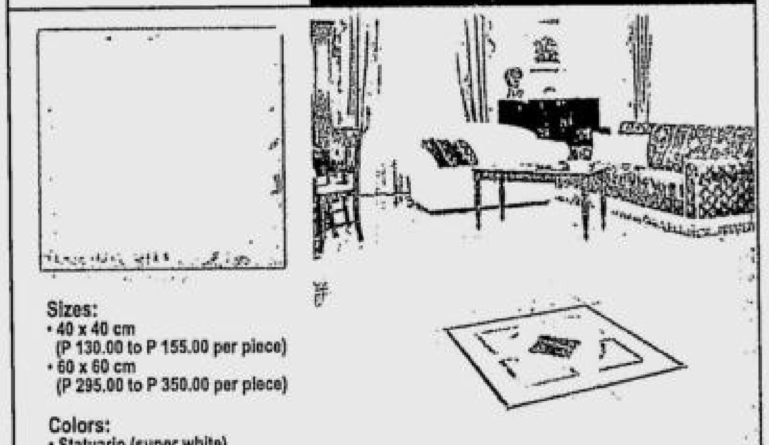

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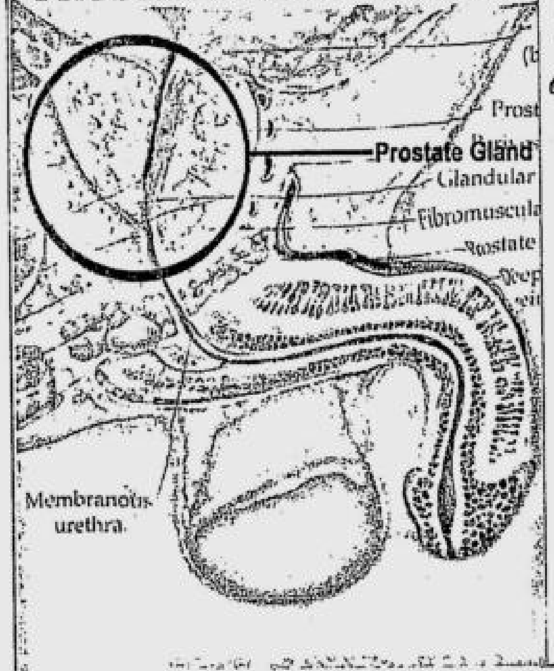

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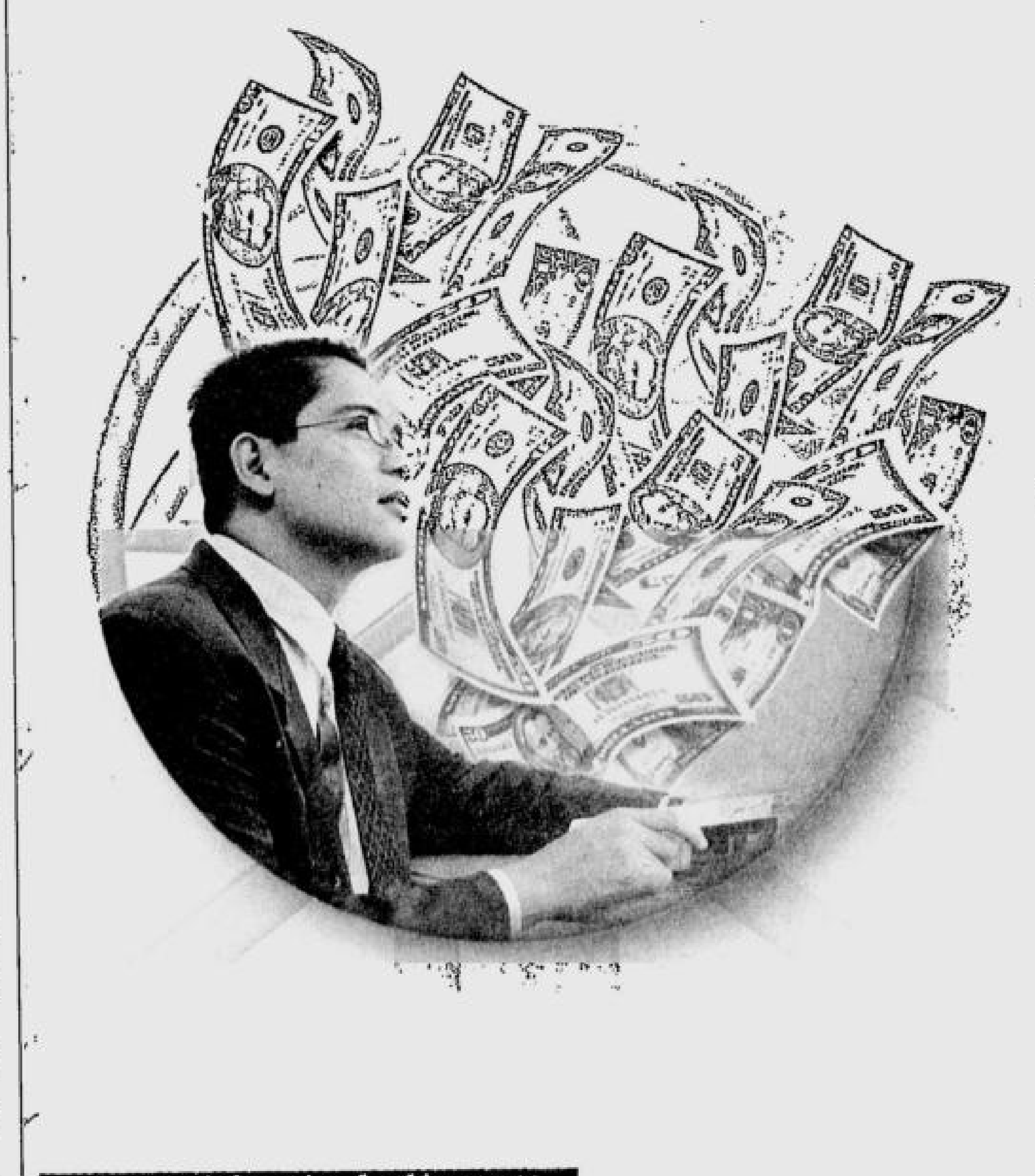

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Loans to develop renewable energy sources urged

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE HEAD of the international environmental group Greenpeace yesterday urged the World Bank and Asian Development Bank, two of the world's biggest financial institutions, to channel their loans toward the development of renewable energy sources.

Greenpeace International Director Gerd Leipold said the World Bank spent more for nonrenewable fossil fuels than on alternative energy even as it made pronouncements against the use of fossil fuels.

The World Bank lends $17 for fossil fuel use for every $1 that it lends for renewable sources of energy, according to Greenpeace.

"It's not enough that the World Bank and ADB say something against climate change. They need to change their lending practices as well," Leipold said at a forum sponsored by the Foreign Correspondents Association of the Philippines.

Leipold warned that Asia, the biggest cause of global climate change, was expected to be hit hard by changes in the climate.

He identified China, India, Japan and South Korea as among the top 10 emitters of greenhouse gases in the world. Of the four, only Japan has signed the Kyoto Protocol.

Greenpeace also said the Philippine government should do more to promote renewable energy sources as Asia's initiatives were crucial in fighting global climate change.

While the Philippines plays "a very positive role" in promoting the Kyoto Protocol, the country still has a lot to do to promote compliance with the agreement, according to Leipold.

"It's always easier to make big statements internationally. Domestically, the Philippines can do more and should do much more," he said.

Red Constantino, Greenpeace campaign director for energy in Southeast Asia, cited the country's wind potential for 70,000 megawatts of energy, which remains untapped due to the government's lack of policy initiatives on renewable energy sources.

Constantino said that a wind potential of only 40 MW was being developed for use in Ilocos Norte, identified as one of the regions with highest wind potential.

"It's ridiculous compared with the 70,000 MW-wind potential of the country. But we won't be able to reach that unless the government sends signals to investors that we are for these renewable sources of energy," he said.

Other provinces like Negros, Romblon and Guimaras hold promise as wind-powered energy sources, according to Costantino. Negros and Ilocos can match the wind potential of turbines in Germany and Denmark, leaders in wind-generated power in the world, he said.

The government should create an investment climate that welcomes private companies using or investing in alternative energy sources instead of just opening up to fossil fuel, according to Constantino.

"The Philippines should harness its tremendous wind potential. Not only will this reduce the country's dependence on fossil fuels, it would also mean massive investments and jobs for the poor and the protection of the environment," Leipold said.

Log ban lifted in 3 areas

From page A1

Even as it allows logging to resume, the DENR vowed to enforce more stringent criteria for legal loggers, including the drastic reduction in the number of holders of timber license agreements.

Only about 20 percent of the 200 Integrated Forest Management Agreement (Ifma) holders and 320 wood processing plants would be allowed by the DENR to operate.

Defensor said he had already revoked the licenses of 180 processing plants found to be serving illegal loggers. About 100 of these are based in Cagayan de Oro.

He noted that sawmills with illegal logger clients had proliferated because the law imposed a penalty of only P1,000 on processing plants caught transacting with illegal loggers.

Committee validation

The DENR has formed a new committee to validate the existing logging concessions in Davao, Caraga and Zamboanga to determine who would be allowed to start operations.

Defensor intends to tap nongovernment organizations to help the DENR in validating the performance of the remaining logging operators.

He said he was eyeing the services of Haribon, World Wildlife Fund, Miriam Peace and other environmental groups to help regulate logging in the three regions.

Of the four options the DENR presented at a press briefing last week, Defensor said logging limited to three regions was the most viable.

Citing a study by the Asian Development Bank, he said the Philippines needed only 1.5 million to 2.3 million hectares of forest for its wood requirements.

Furniture makers had expressed concern that limiting logging to three areas in Mindanao could raise the cost of transporting the raw materials to production sites, mostly in Luzon.

While he admitted that transportation would not be cheap, Defensor said the selective logging to be imposed by the DENR this week would still be cheaper for all stakeholders than importing wood.

Members of the country's furniture industry asked Defensor on Friday to reconsider the total log ban that was imposed in December, saying it was endangering the jobs of their 1.8 million workers.

Allow harvesting in plantations

At a forum at the Sulo Hotel in Quezon City, Nick de Lange, president of the Chamber of Furniture Industries of the Philippines (CFIP), urged Defensor to allow timber harvesting in plantations as soon as possible while keeping the total log ban in protected and endangered forests.

He said the CFIP had supported the temporary total log ban when it was imposed last year.

But the continued imposition of the ban was killing the furniture industry, according to De Lange.

"We now call on Secretary Defensor to immediately amend his memorandum and allow timber harvesting in private plantations. The prolonged total ban has adversely affected legitimate industries and spared the culprits behind forest denudation—the illegal loggers," he said.

The CFIP also asked Defensor to exempt minor forest products, such as *buri*, rattan, vines, bark and fibers, because these could not be replaced by imports.

De Lange said the CFIP was supporting sustainable forest management "for with dead forests, our industry will die, too."

He said selective logging would ensure the continued supply of wood and other forest-based products to businesses that need them like furniture makers, housing and construction firms, and paper manufacturers.

De Lange said lifting the log ban in only two to three areas in Mindanao would not solve the problems of illegal logging and dwindling wood supply.

Shakedown

Worse, there is a "raging shakedown" of the $600-million industry, resulting in "wanton searches, seizures, impounding and criminalization-by-publicity and by photo-op of entrepreneurs, most of whom have been granted the necessary permits," he said.

He said the CFIP had received reports from its chapters, especially in the Visayas and Mindanao, that they had been victimized by mulcting policemen and other government agencies in the guise of going after hot logs.

"This harassment on highways, seaports and airports has become opportunities for *pangongotong* (mulcting), on the strength of Secretary Defensor's memorandum," De Lange said.

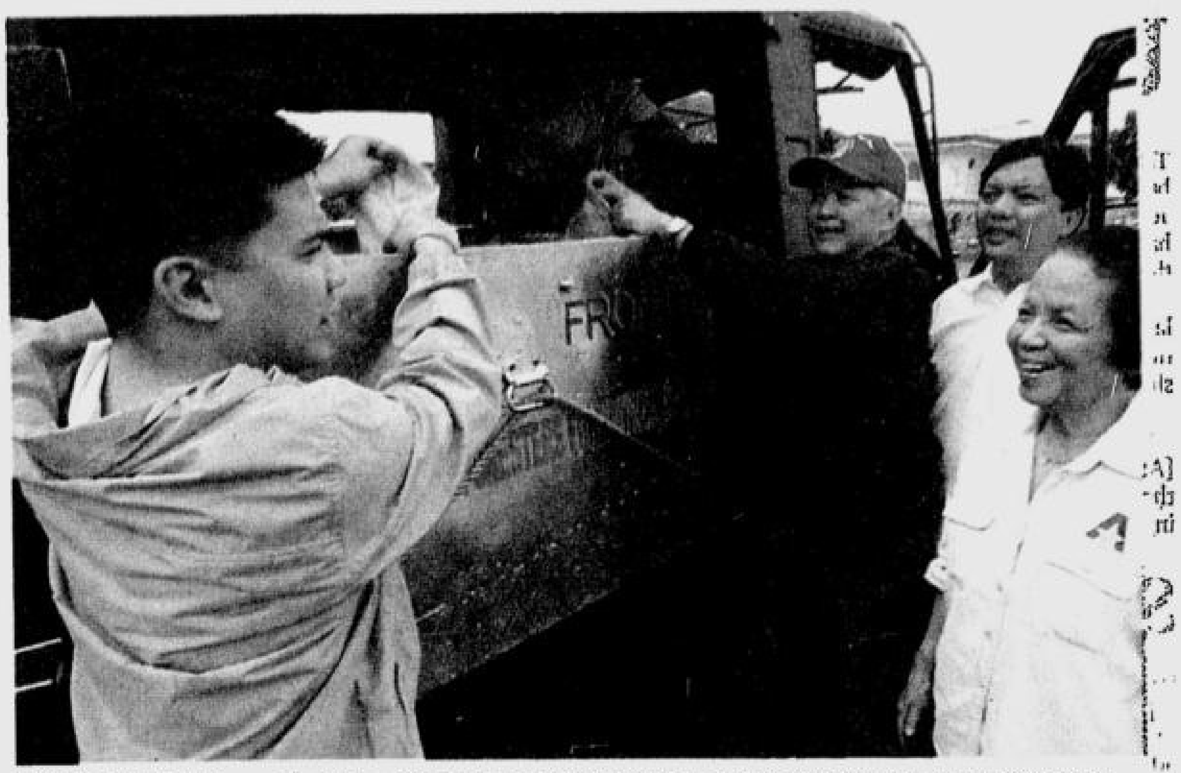
He asked PNP Director General Edgar Aglipay to investigate policemen who demand money from furniture makers. De Lange noted that police checkpoints had become "cash points."

He said the CFIP also had to deal with various government agencies and task forces that seemed to function "without coordination."

"For furniture makers, these agencies seem not to know what they should be doing, which is to run after illegal loggers and illegal logs. Instead, it is the legitimate entrepreneurs who are victimized," De Lange said.

CFIP members have expressed doubts that the furniture industry would be able to equal or exceed its $300 million in export sales last year.

"The livelihood of 1.8 million workers and 12,500 furniture makers are put in grave danger. All in all, the situation is bad for the furniture industry," De Lange said. *With a report from Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*



ENVIRONMENT Secretary Michael Defensor and reforestation czar Victor Corpus load seedlings on a dispenser fitted on a Philippine Air Force helicopter in preparation for aerial seeding at the Angat watershed. With them are environmentalists Leonarda and Teodoro Camacho. ROMEO GACAD/AFP

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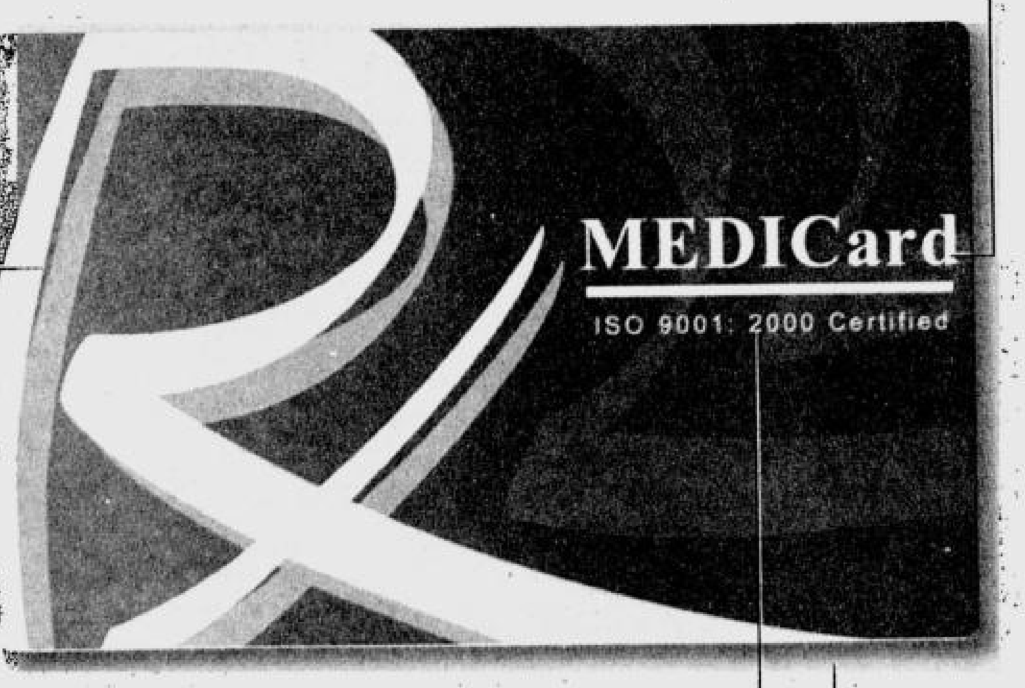

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Unuse caused Naia 3 power outage, engineers say

THE MASSIVE power failure that hit the mothballed Ninoy Aquino International Airport (Naia) Terminal 3 in late February showed what could happen to an idle facility, no matter how state-of-the-art it might be, if it was not being used.

Engineers from Takenaka Corp. and the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA) traced the power failure to an underground cable that short-circuited, a MIAA official said yesterday.

"They [engineers] said the cable had moisture which softened it, causing a short-circuit. [All this] was caused by the infrequent use of the air conditioning and lights [in the building], among other things," said the source, requesting anonymity.

The source said that even if Naia 3 was not being used, the power to it should be turned on often to keep the facility from deteriorating: "There should be regular testing of the parts, but as it turned out, this was not happening."

The source said the constant checking of Naia 3 was the responsibility of Takenaka, the contractor hired by the terminal's builder, Philippine International Air Transport Co. (Piatco), since there has been "no formal turnover by Takenaka to the MIAA management for the maintenance of the airport."

The government expropriated Naia 3 in December 2004 but legal cases over the issue are still pending in the Supreme Court and two international arbitration committees.

Power was restored to Naia 3 on March 2.

Nikko Dizon

Survivor helps mark legacy . . .

From page A1

Japanese captors from the Bataan peninsula to Camp O'Donnel in Capas, Tarlac. Of the 60,000 to 80,000 captives, only 54,000 prisoners reached the camp alive.

Each marker indicated a POW's ordeal at each stage, starting in Mariveles town. It had an emblem with the figures of a fallen soldier and two others who continued to march, wearily clinging to each other.

But by the time Am-Cham began the restoration, only "10 to 15" of the original markers were found still standing. Some had been knocked over, defaced, or chopped off. The rest of the markers had simply gone missing, carted away by the locals and reportedly even "offered to tourists as souvenirs," she said.

Through the years, parts of the original Death March route had virtually been erased, mainly with the construction of the Subic export processing zone, changes in the road system, and the landscape-altering eruptions of Mount Pinatubo, she said.

Missing markers

To date, FAME has replaced 83 markers, with the latest marker to be planted in time for this year's Bataan Day observance on April 9, Murray said. Helping fund the project are both local and US donors, including individuals, families and groups not at all associated with WWII commemorations.

"But it's still sadly disappointing; we tried to place them in front of schools, homes and businesses, hoping they will finally get the right kind of attention. But they are still getting the wrong kind of attention," she told the INQUIRER.

In last year's national elections, for example, many of the restored markers were "slapped with campaign posters," she said, adding: "Again they were vandalized, they were not respected. And I just feel that the youth, the population in general, whoever is doing the desecration, should understand that it's like [writing] graffiti on tombstones."

"Basically the markers are memorials to the dead, so it's such a shame," she said.

Murray was among the American expatriates and tourists who attended memorial services on historic Corregidor Island on March 2 marking the retaking of the island fortress dubbed "The Rock" by American paratroopers in 1945.

Memories of the war

"I was only 5 [years old] during Liberation so my memories are a little dim, but I do remember the fires and the bombings," Murray said.

She confided that hearing gunshots and cannon fire—even the "peacetime" gun salutes during the Corregidor ceremonies—would trigger childhood wartime fears. "I still carry that part with me."

Leslie resides in Makati City with her British husband Brian, a naturalized Filipino citizen. She was born in California and was only 6 months old when her family came to Manila because her father, who was with an import-export company, was posted here.

An only child, her family was living in Del Pan when they were rounded up together with other foreign nationals and incarcerated at the University of Sto. Tomas from 1942 to 1945.

After the war, her family spent the next 10 years in the States and later moved to Hong Kong. She was back in the Philippines by the time she was 21, and had since traveled extensively around the country.

Murray had also worked for local travel agencies and was one-time country manager for Scandinavian Airlines. She's now an editorial consultant for Am-Cham.

Going to school

She had no ready anecdotes about the war during the INQUIRER interview. But after a few questions, hazy images started to surface.

The foreign prisoners were not exactly held in cells but in "classrooms" at the UST, she said, with the women and children kept in the main building and the men in another.

Her father was among those who worked in the camp's kitchen. "There wasn't much food. There was only *lugaw* (porridge), and it got less and less throughout the years until [meals were served] just once a day."

Asked if it was hard growing up during the war, Murray, not surprisingly, managed to dig up the more pleasant and innocent of memories. Since the UST inmates were composed of professionals—teachers, priests, doctors, businessmen—they were able to form a "community" so elders held classes for the youngsters, she recalled.

"We actually had a nursery, a school for small children and a high school," she said.

Know your history

Murray could not easily recall any close encounters with their Japanese captors. "All I know was that we had to bow [to them] and there was a roll call every morning and evening. My parents were there and I'm just very glad that we all survived," she said.

Six decades later, whatever she lacked in war yarns, she more than made up for in sentiment and determination to keep the veterans' legacy alive and relevant.

"Even though I don't have vivid memories of the war, I'm saddened by the fact that little is known of World War II here," she said.

"I don't know what they're teaching in History, but they're not telling them here. Even in the States, there's a lot of emphasis on Europe. Everybody knows about Normandy but not too many people know about the Leyte or Lingayen landing," Murray noted.

"History is not being taught, or if it's taught, it's not really being absorbed, which I think is a pity for the Filipino youth," she lamented.

"I think it's very important for the students, the present generation, to know their history and appreciate what their fathers, uncles and grandfathers had fought for."

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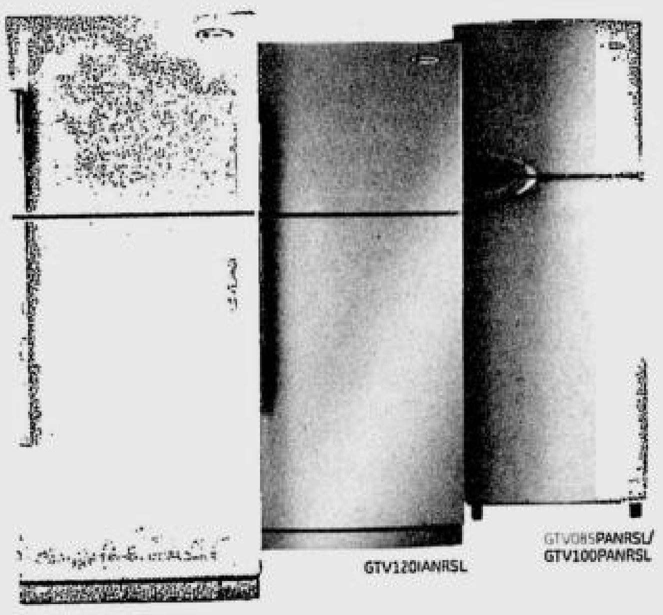

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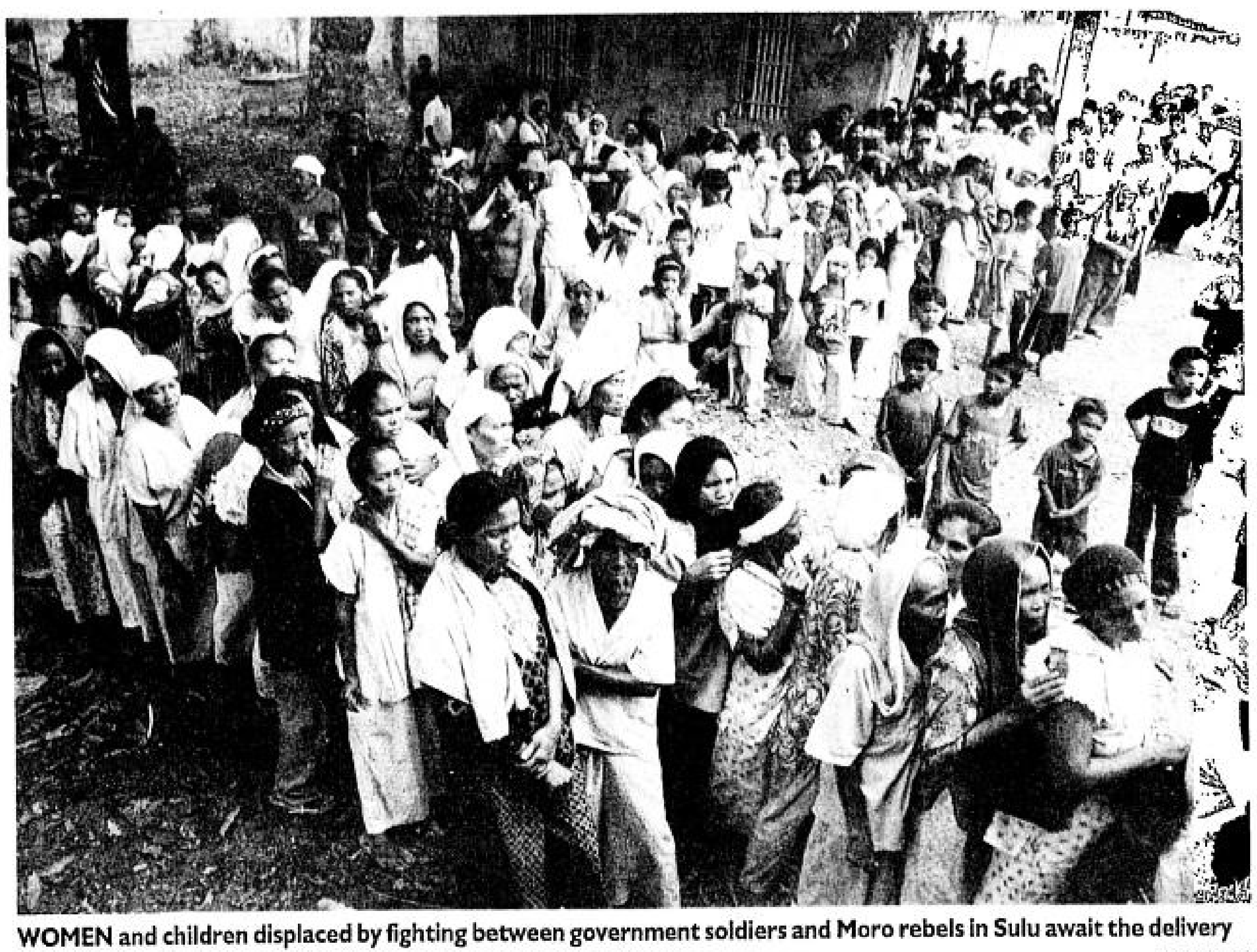

WOMEN and children displaced by fighting between government soldiers and Moro rebels in Sulu await the delivery of government relief items in Panamao town. REM ZAMORA

Sulu group says gov't rehab plan a face-lift

From page A1

convenor of the Civil Society Organization, likened Sulu to a person stricken with cancer and undergoing chemotherapy, and slammed the rehabilitation plan as "superficial."

It is like giving "a facelift and hair transplant" to a patient gravely ill with cancer, she said.

Jukuy said that aside from rehabilitation, the government should dig deeper into the causes of the recent clashes.

She invited Deles to a forum with residents on March 18 to discuss what the people of Sulu wanted.

'Can people eat malls?'

"Let's find out if they want malls, roads. Can they eat roads? Or [do] they want access to sanitary water and learning centers?" Jukuy said.

Deles said she could not attend the forum as she had to attend her daughter's graduation on that day.

Cocoy Tulawie, a municipal councilor in Jolo, urged the national government to establish a human rights desk in Sulu to investigate alleged rights abuses and the reported massacre by security forces of a family in Jolo on Feb. 1.

Some local Muslim officials said the massacre had angered the followers of jailed Moro National Liberation Front leader Nur Misuari and triggered the clashes with government troops.

Relief supplies

At least 100 people, 34 of them soldiers, died in the fighting which lasted more than a week and forced more than 50,000 villagers to flee.

Of that number, at least 33,000 refused to return to their homes, fearing renewed violence.

Ms Arroyo on Friday said there would be no "letup in punitive actions" against the guerrillas, rejecting a proposed truce brokered by Muslim leaders in Jolo.

A military transport plane arrived in Jolo on Saturday, bringing tons of relief goods that were distributed to hungry refugees in Panamao, one of the towns most affected by the clashes.

Presidential adviser Jesus Dureza, who visited refugee centers in Panamao, said: "We assured the people that government would help them and we are doing everything we can to bring more developments in Jolo." *With AFP report*

Only 16% of Pinoy moms...

From page A1

borns milk formula, said Dr. Jean-Marc Olive, WHO Philippine representative.

No wonder 30 percent of Filipino babies are either malnourished or undernourished, he said.

Not only that, as many as 82,000 babies—newborn to 5 months old—die every year for various reasons, including common diseases like diarrhea and malnutrition which could easily be prevented if they had been breast-fed from birth, he added.

Alarm bells

The WHO sounded the alarm after a report came out that the Philippines was one of 42 countries that accounted for 90 percent of child deaths worldwide since 2000.

As many as 16,000 Filipino infants less than 5 months of age would contract fewer infections if they were exclusively breast-fed from birth, Olive said.

Milk supplied directly from the breast is not only free of bacteria, mother's milk contains antibodies which help babies stave off infections, he said.

Among the common causes of child deaths are diarrhea, pneumonia and sepsis which, according to the WHO representative, could easily be prevented with proper nutrition from breast-feeding.

Citing studies by Geneva-based experts, 75 percent of child deaths can be prevented by breast-feeding alone, meaning the baby would survive and remain healthy even without vitamins, water and other supplements, Olive said.

In the Philippines, Filipino moms tend to snub breast-feeding, complaining that they don't have enough milk, and just buy milk formula.

"We need to demystify the issue of breast milk," Olive said. "There's a misconception here that mothers don't have enough milk, so immediately they shift to milk formula."

Truth is, 95 percent of mothers can breast-feed "with no problem," he said. "Mothers should allow babies to suckle to stimulate milk production. If they give them a bottle, it's easier (for the mothers) but it's worse for the babies."

The WHO representative attributed the unpopularity of breast-feeding to the lack of support from the medical profession and the aggressive campaign of milk companies for mothers to choose formula over breast milk.

There are milk companies that claim that infant formulas could make babies healthier and more intelligent, he said. "That's completely wrong."

Practical reasons

Citing studies, Olive said breast-fed children were "intellectually better" than those raised on milk formula.

In the Philippines, the issue is practicality. "Since milk formula is expensive and breast milk is free, I think it's better to spend money for a child's supplement after he reaches six months," he said.

Olive clarified other myths. A mother down with the flu should continue breast-feeding because her milk would provide antibodies to protect her baby from getting sick, he said.

When asked if it's safe for mothers who are heavy smokers and drinkers to breast-feed their babies, he admitted that the WHO had yet to come up with a position on that backed by studies.

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Asia women leaders mask ...

From page A1

the first women to head their nations.

Yet, in all but the case of New Zealand, the women concerned have been the widows or daughters of former rulers and founding fathers, some of whose families have maintained a grip on power off and on over several decades.

"There is strong legacy of family politics in South Asia, where family background takes precedence over gender," Pakistani women's rights activist Kamila Hayat told Agence France-Presse.

"But this leadership by women does not translate into empowerment of women in their countries, where levels of female education and social, political and economic development remain low."

In Pakistan, Benazir Bhutto was prime minister from 1988-1990 and again from 1993-1996 before she was forced out of power on corruption charges and left the country to live in self-imposed exile.

Her father, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, was Pakistan's first elected prime minister, but was executed by military leader Zia-ul Haq in 1978.

Similar situations

Hayat points to similar situations throughout South Asia, with Italian-born Sonia Gandhi hailing from the Gandhi-Nehru dynasty in India, and Sri Lankan President Kumaratunga being the daughter of an assassinated prime minister.

In Bangladesh, voters have had a woman prime minister since 1991, with two major rivals twice swapping the post—Sheikh Hasina Wajed, the daughter of the country's founder Mujibur Rehman, and incumbent Khalida Zia, the wife of slain President Zia ur Rehman.

"That both the ruling and main opposition parties are led by women is the exception, not the rule," says lawyer Khusi Kabir, a leading women's rights campaigner in Bangladesh.

"More than three decades after independence, the number of women MPs is very low in Bangladesh because the political parties don't have the commitment to promote women."

CHANDRIKA KUMARATUNGA AFP

KHALEDA ZIA AFP

Bangladesh's Parliament last November passed a bill to reserve 45 seats for women, although this has yet to be implemented and it has been criticized for allowing parties to select the appointees rather than them being elected.

RP case

Philippine President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo is the daughter of the late President Diosdado Macapagal, while the country's first female president, Corazon Aquino, who swept into office on the strength of People Power in 1986, was the wife of an assassinated opposition figure.

Political analyst Sheila Coronel said "the country is ruled by political elites ... marriages are a form of clan alliance that expand the influence of the families and allow them to consolidate their resources.

"When compared to party loyalties that shift with each change in political season, marriages are long-term, if not permanent, coalitions. Philippine law, after all, does not allow divorce."

Sixty percent of women who occupy seats in the Congress come from political families. But with almost one-sixth of lawmakers women—compared with 5 percent 40 years ago—the Philippines has better representation than many Asian countries.

Across Asia, no parliament has more than a third of its legislators as women, according to a survey released Thursday by the International Parliamentary Union (IPU).

The region lags behind Europe and the Americas and hovers just below the world average of 15.7 percent representation at the beginning of 2005, the survey found.

New Zealand

New Zealand fares best in the region with almost 30 percent of parliamentary seats occupied by women. It also has a female governor general and top judge.

Despite long histories of women leaders, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka rank worst in the region for female MPs, with 2.0 percent and 4.9 percent respectively, according to the IPU survey. India does not fare much better with 8.3 percent.

"There was a time from 1985 to 1990, when the presence of women in parliament and legislatures was high and that was because then Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi gave more tickets to women to contest polls. But in the 1990s, that trend declined," said Girija Vyas, who heads India's national commission for women.

But things might soon change for the better, she added. The government had promised to present a bill reserving one third of the seats in parliament and state legislatures for women. AFP

Malaysia crackdown creates labor shortfall

From page A1

shortfall of cheap labor in critical industries, a newspaper reported Sunday

About 450,000 illegals—including some 68,000 Filipinos, according to Philippine estimates—are believed to have left Malaysia during the recent amnesty period which ended Feb. 28.

An estimated 400,000 still remain in Malaysia.

The amnesty was followed by a raid-and-arrest crackdown at work sites, which netted nearly 1,000 workers. More than 200 of them were Filipinos.

Malaysian officials said bureaucratic bottlenecks at Indonesian emigration centers charged with providing proper documentation to Indonesians so they could return to work legally in Malaysia was endangering the latter's construction and plantation sectors.

Virtual standstill

A program allowing Indonesians who left Malaysia under the amnesty to legalize themselves in Indonesia has come to a virtual standstill because of administrative delays there, The Star newspaper reported.

"I think it is in Indonesia's benefit to facilitate the workers' return because Malaysia has already done its part. Otherwise, we may have to source workers from other countries," the newspaper quoted the Malaysian Employers' Federation president, Mohamad Jafar Abdul Carrim, as saying.

Foreign workers from Indonesia, the Philippines, Bangladesh and India form the backbone of Malaysia's construction and plantation industries, taking low-paying jobs that Malaysians won't do. About 1 million of them have legal papers.

No applications processed

Malaysia has promised to take back workers who left voluntarily during the amnesty program, provided they came in with proper papers.

As part of a deal with Malaysia, Indonesia set up one-stop centers to process applications from Malaysian employers to legalize their former Indonesian employees.

But at one such center in Indonesia, not one application has been approved in the last 10 days, The Star reported.

Home Minister Azmi Khalid and a team of officials are currently in Jakarta to meet with top Indonesian officials to resolve the problem.

Malaysia is also sending Dato Seri Aseh Haji, a secretary general in its Ministry of Home Affairs, to the Philippines to discuss the humane treatment and orderly repatriation of Filipino illegals who would either voluntarily return to the Philippines or would be expelled. He was to arrive in Manila yesterday.

Unfinished homes

"We acknowledge that there is a bottleneck and hope to sort things out with our counterparts here," Immigration Department enforcement director Ishak Mohamed was quoted as saying.

Mohamad Jafar of the employers' federation said at least two main economic sectors—construction and plantations—were critically hit by the delay in getting the workers back.

"House buyers face not getting their homes delivered on time, and developers will be liable for not completing their projects within the stipulated timeframe," he told The Star.

Foreign workers needed

Mohamad Jafar said Indonesians made up 90 percent of the labor force in the construction industry, and between 50 percent and 60 percent on plantations.

Human Resources Minister Foong Chan Onn said Malaysia was already looking at other sources of labor, such as Vietnam, Thailand and the Philippines.

Up to half a million Filipinos live in Malaysia, many of them families of refugees who fled a separatist rebellion in Mindanao in the 1970s.

An estimated 200,000 are staying there illegally.

Illegal workers caught face possible fines, jail terms and whipping with a rattan cane before deportation. They are also barred from returning to Malaysia.

Human rights groups have voiced concerns that some of the 300,000 police, immigration officials and volunteers taking part in rounding up illegal workers might use excessive force while trying to detain suspects. AP

'Minsan Pa,' Cesar, Ara top Golden Screen winners

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE ENTERTAINMENT Press Society, or Enpress, paid tribute on Saturday to two independently produced films: "Minsan Pa" and "Panaghoy sa Suba," by bestowing upon them most of the major awards in the second Golden Screen awards ceremony at the RCBC Plaza in Makati City.

"Minsan Pa," an unconventional love story of a Cebuano tour guide (Jomari Yllana) and a sightseer (Ara Mina), bagged five awards, including the highly coveted best picture plum.

Jeffrey Jeturian was heralded best director for his work on "Minsan Pa," while lady lead Ara Mina, who plays lovelorn pre-school teacher Luna, was declared best supporting actress.

The award from Enpress was Jeturian's second, after having won the same honor for Seiko Films' "Bridal Shower" last year. "Minsan Pa" is the first production of MLR Films.

Armando "Bing" Lao's work on "Minsan Pa" was honored with a best original screenplay trophy that night, while Arnel de Pano's composition "Minsan," interpreted by Jonathan Badon, was the best original song.

The best actor trophy was awarded to Cesar Montano for his work on "Panaghoy sa Suba," a romantic story in the midst of chaos during the Second World War.

Montano directed, acted and produced the movie under his CM Films. The movie was made entirely in Cebuano, with Bohol's pristine Loboc River as backdrop.

"Panaghoy" won for Nonong Buencamino the best musical score award, as well as the best sound award for Nestor Mutya and Angie Reyes.

When "Minsan Pa" failed to make it to the 2004 Metro Manila Film Festival's circle of eight entries, its producer MLR Films filed a complaint before the MMFF executive committee (Execom).

Lawyer Joji Alonso of MLR Films accused the Execom of adjusting rules and regulations "to favor certain producers over the others." Four of the eight movie entries were said to be "productions of the Monteverde group," referring to Regal matriarch Lily Monteverde.

The four movies are "Mano Po 3," "Aishite Imasu 1941," "So Happy Together" and "Sigaw."

"I'm not going into movie production for the money. All I want is to make a good film as my personal contribution to the industry, at the risk of losing my investment. What is painful is the reality that sometimes, noble causes are set aside for personal interests," Alonso told the INQUIRER in an earlier interview.

But Alonso was very pleased last Saturday. While accepting the best picture award, she thanked people who helped come up with the film. "Special thanks to our lead actor Jomari, who worked really hard. It's not easy to be crying and acting in Filipino, Bisaya and Japanese," said Alonso.

Another big winner is Star Cinema's "Now That I Have You," which won the best picture award for musical or comedy. The film features former love team partners John Lloyd Cruz and Bea Alonzo.

Judy Ann Santos beat veterans Nora Aunor ("Naglalayag") and Vilma Santos ("Mano Po 3") to the best dramatic actress trophy for her offbeat performance in the movie "Sabel."

Diamond Star Maricel Soriano was awarded best actress for a comedic role in Regal Film's "I Will Survive." Eric Quizon was declared best actor for comedy for his work on "So Happy Together," also from Regal Films.

Johnny Delgado brought home the best supporting actor trophy for Unitel Films' "Santa Santita," while newcomers Dennis Trillo and Iza Calzado were honored for their breakthrough performances in "Aishite Imasu 1941" and "Milan," respectively.

The best visual effects award was handed to Imaginary Friends for its work on "Enteng Kabisote: Okay Ka Fairy Ko... The Legend," while Isabel de Rosa and Tony Reyes took home the best original screenplay adaptation for the same fantasy-comedy film.

Other winners are Vito Cajili ("Feng Shui"), best editing; Edgar Martin Littaua ("Santa Santita"), best production design; Lee Meily ("Santa Santita"), best cinematography; and Dingdong Dantes and Sunshine Cruz as celebrity couple of the night.

ARA MINA giving her acceptance speech. JGP

Man shot dead in Makati bar

A YOUNG management executive was found dead in the parking lot of a popular bar in Makati City early Saturday morning.

Supt. Alejandro of the Makati Police homicide section identified the victim as Jerson Morales, 28, single, of Santolan Road, Quezon City, who stepped out of the Purple Pear Bar along Figuerres St. around 2:45 a.m.

Probers ruled out suicide as the motive for killing as evidence at the scene suggested. Morales, who was shot once in the chest at close range, still had his wallet and other personal effects when Purple Pear head of security Epifanio Apacible discovered the body following a gunshot heard from inside the bar. Two spent shells from a .38 caliber pistol were later found nearby.

As of press time, the police have not identified suspects in the killing but are pursuing leads.

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Overheated fan eyed in blaze that killed 1

By D.J. Yap and Tarra V. Quismundo

AN ELECTRIC fan that may have overheated is being eyed as the cause of the blaze that killed a 2-year-old girl and destroyed 300 houses in a shanty community in Quezon City yesterday afternoon.

Fire probers said the fire started at 4:05 p.m. at 142 Acacis St., Sitio San Roque II, Barangay Pag-Asa and quickly spread to adjoining houses in the middle of the community bound by Edsa, North Avenue, Agham Road and Quezon Avenue.

Two-year-old Geraldine Lusay was trapped at her house and was burned to death. Her mother, Jenny, 24, tried to rescue her but was pushed back by flames.

Jenny, who suffered second degree burns, was one of several people hurt in the incident. She was rushed to the East Avenue Medical Center for treatment.

Bureau of Fire Prevention officials said the fire reached Task Force Echo, one of the highest alarms.

The blaze was declared under control at 7:09 p.m. last night.

The night before, an hourlong blaze turned a busy garments factory into a warehouse of ash in Muntinlupa City.

At 10:23 p.m. Saturday, fire broke out inside Great Effects Garments Enterprises Inc., a denim processing plant inside Philcrest Compound on West Service Road, Barangay Cupang.

"The security guard of the building called us about the fire, and when we got there, half of the building was already ablaze," said SFO1 Arnel Autencio, Muntinlupa City arson investigator.

The garments warehouse was a rented facility inside Philcrest Compound owned by one Philip Lim.

Other manufacturing firms occupy the compound.

The factory, which processed ready-made denim into washed designs, had just closed at about 10 p.m. the other night, the end of the company's second shift. Minutes later, fire broke out on the left side of the building, in a wooden wall separating the factory's canteen and clinic at the ground floor, said Autencio.

The fire of yet unknown origin then spread to the production section, which occupied most of the building's floor area.

Autencio said the factory's vital machinery and other tools, including washers, steamers, dryers, flat irons and sandblasting machines were destroyed. The fire also ate up stacks of denim that was ready for distribution to clients.

When the fire was put out 10 minutes before midnight, some P5 million in property had been lost.

Fake Lee shirts seized in raid

THE NATIONAL Bureau of Investigation (NBI) confiscated some P7 million in fake "Lee" brand T-shirts in a Navotas factory Friday night.

NBI agents found the counterfeit shirts at the shop of Multi Fashion Manufacturing Corp. at Encarnacion Street, San Village, owned by a certain Sherry Tan.

A total of 16,180 "Lee" T-shirts and 10 high-speed sewing machines, all estimated to be worth P7 million, were confiscated.

Charges of unfair competition and trademark infringement have been filed against Tan.

Margaux C. Ortiz

Rizal traders seek help from execs

COTTAGE industries in Rizal are crying out for help from the provincial government to help them meet rising production costs and aggressive competition from other countries.

An organization of small and medium-scale entrepreneurs in Rizal are saying that an industrial complex, something like a one-stop shop, can do much to help them become competitive.

The complex shall serve as the business center for cottage industries, Rizal Exporters and Manufacturers Association Inc. president Estela Nuique told reporters last week.

Most of their members are into the manufacture of home and holiday decors which are exported abroad.

At present, small and medium-scale entrepreneurs do business and hold office in their backyards.

Nuique said attracting buyers was very difficult under this setup. *Edson C. Tandoc Jr.*

MMDA advice to car sellers

By Tarra V. Quismundo

SELLING your car?

Make sure you immediately omit your name from the vehicle's registration once you do, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando said yesterday.

In his weekly program over radio dzBB, Fernando warned car owners about missing the all-important change in registration name, once their vehicles are passed on to other owners.

For whoever's name is on paper would be held liable for any violation or accident where a vehicle would figure in.

"Once you sell your car, make sure you remove your name from the registration because that might cause you trouble," said Fernando.

Life Rx

from Dr. Ricardo Fernandez

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CoQ10 is a natural substance in the body. However, once you reach the age of 23, the amount of CoQ10 starts to fall due to lifestyle choices and stress from environmental and even personal causes. It has been observed that an inadequate supply of CoQ10 can have adverse effects on the body. It is also noted that people with cancer have very low blood levels of CoQ10 in their system. That is why CoQ10 is popularly used to supplement existing cancer therapy. Owing to its energy giving ability and antioxidant action, it has been consistently observed that low CoQ10 levels equates to poor health.

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This is for educational purposes only and is not meant to replace your doctor's advice. Ask your doctor for more information or you can call the AddLife Hotline at 920-1911

Dr. Ricardo O. Fernandez finished his Doctor of Medicine at the University of Sto. Tomas. He is a consultant at the Makati Medical Center and Associate Board Examiner of the Philippine Board of Otolaryngology.

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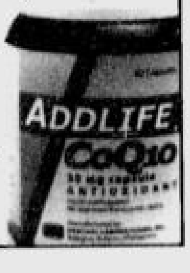

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PROGRAM OF ACTIVITIES

Day 0 – March 14, 2005- Monday
Arrival of Delegates / Registration
Check-in at Bayview Hotel, Roxas Blvd.
College of Fellows Meeting
Business Meeting & Elections
Welcome Dinner & Presidents Night

Day 1- March 15,2005- Tuesday
Opening Ceremonies
Le Pavillon

Keynote Speaker:

Jaime Cura, Creba President
"The Filipino Architect: Creating Job and Career Opportunities"

Plenary Session 1:

Hon. Sen. Aquilino Pimentel, Jr.
"Strategic Positioning for Architects in the Context of Today's Practice"

Plenary Session 11:

Sec. Michael T. Defensor, DENR Secretary
"The Challenge: Innovative Architectural Approaches to Community Development"

Plenary Session 111:

Arch. Gilbert Yu, fuap, G&W Architects
"Innovating the Architectural Profession: Through Ethical Non-Traditional Ways"

Fellowship Dinner "Old Jeans Night"

Day 2-March 16 – Wednesday
Worldbex Opening Ceremonies
PIA Exhibits Opening, PTTC
Worldbex Filipiniana Night

Day 3- March 17- Thursday
Worldbex Seminars, PTTC
Investiture Night and Honor Dinner
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Day 4- March 18 – Friday
Check-out of Delegates

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Payatas: From dump to model housing

By D.J. Yap

THROW a good idea in Payatas and dump a load of goodwill and what used to be notorious for garbage would be known for gold—hearts of gold, that is.

Plans are afoot to convert a portion of the dump in Quezon City into a model community of urban poor folk who scavenge there.

Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. has signed a memorandum of understanding for the "Payatas Ecoville Project," a housing program for scavengers in Barangay Payatas.

About 900 low-cost houses would be built on a 7.5-hectare property near the place where garbage form mountains of urban refuse.

Private sector funding

Each house would cost around P70,000 and would be funded by the private sector.

The project was made possible through the donation by Madrigal matriarch Doña Consuela Madrigal of the property to the Quezon City government.

Once completed, the housing project would transform the Payatas area into a model community with basic amenities such as cemented roads, a school, a church, community center and recreational facilities.

The Quezon City government would provide the development of the road's right of way and participate in the selection of the program beneficiaries.

Ramon Asprer, head of the city's urban poor affairs office, said priority would be given to families living along the danger zone of the dumpsite.

The danger zone includes fringes of the mountains of garbage, which are in constant danger of collapsing and burying hundreds of settlers.

July 2000 avalanche

On July 10, 2000, a wall of garbage fell on about 500 shanties in Sitio Lupang Pangako on the eastern side of the dump. More than 229 people were killed and about 670 families had to be relocated.

The accident site has since been closed and topped with soil as part of the city government's efforts to redevelop the area.

One such development is the building of a P12-million methane-fed power plant that proponents say can produce one megawatt of electricity enough to power 2,000 households.

The power plant may even be tapped to supply electricity to the new housing project.

The Madrigal Foundation would provide the funding requirements for the development of the housing project, which would be built in cooperation with partners from the private sector.

Other partner agencies in the project are Habitat for Humanity Philippine Foundation Inc., Ayala Land, Makati Development Corp., IPM Construction and Development Corp., and the Ina ng Lupang Pangako Parish under the Novaliches Diocese.

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Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres

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Castillo jumper lifts P'foods past FedEx

FEDEX import Anthony Miller seems to be taunting Purefoods' Jun Limpot to take a shot during their game last night. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

By Jasmine W. Payo

NOY CASTILLO drained a jumper with 1.7 seconds left to cap a strong comeback Purefoods translated into an exciting 92-90 win over FedEx in the PBA Fiesta Conference yesterday at the Araneta Coliseum.

Castillo wiggled himself out of Wynne Arboleda's tight defense to finish with 17 points and seven assists.

"That play was really for Noy," said coach Ryan Gregorio, whose Hotdogs overcame a 19-point deficit in the second quarter. "I really liked it because he was able to shoot it just in time."

The Hotdogs' comeback was also aided by Antonio Smith, the 6-foot-8 workhorse who topscored with 22 points, including 15 in the second half, and grabbed 23 rebounds despite a so-so start.

"We struggled in the first half due to lack of familiarity," added Gregorio. "But Smith bailed us out towards the end. I liked his tenacity on defense, rebounding and his energy."

In the second game, import Dalron Johnson also made an impressive debut by scoring 25 points and grabbing 15 rebounds to lead the Red Bull Barakos to a 93-86 stunner over back-to-back champions Barangay Ginebra Kings.

"He did a good job on both ends of the court," said Red Bull coach Yeng Guiao of his 6-foot-9 American center. "He's a very efficient player."

Red Bull pulled away from a 70-70 deadlock at the final eight-minute mark by outscoring Ginebra 15-2 in the next four minutes for an 85-72 buffer.

The Barakos also withstood the big games of Kings guard Mark Caguioa, who finished with a game-high 32 points, and import Eddie Elisma, who chipped in 22.

Purefoods trailed by nine in the last three minutes, 90-81, but Smith powered his way at the low post to slice the lead, 90-85. Castillo then knocked home a three-pointer at the 1:18 mark that narrowed the gap to 90-88.

Smith, who missed seven of his first eight attempts from the stripe, later tied it at 90 after finally sinking his free throws with 44.5 seconds left.

The Express had a chance to retake the lead but Kerby Raymundo came from behind to block a short hook by import Anthony Miller, giving Purefoods possession with 18.2 seconds remaining and setting up Castillo's game-winning basket.

FedEx seemed poised to run

CASTILLO/ A28

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INFRACTION DISPUTE

PAL flightmate clears Pagunsan

By Musong R. Castillo

ERNIE U SARMIENTO

JUVIC Pagunsan and his caddy at Binitin.

BACOLOD—I didn't do it and no one in our flight did.

This was emphasized by Ernesto Lim of Wack Wack, who sought the INQUIRER yesterday to deny reports that he confirmed the infraction that led to a costly two-stroke penalty on Canlubang ace Juvic Pagunsan in the Philippine Airlines Interclub golf championship that ended here Saturday.

"I want to set the record straight: I was not the one who confirmed (the infraction) and no one in our flight was able to (confirm it)," Lim said.

Lim, along with Bong Brobio of Southwoods and Joel Opaco of Del Monte, were flightmates of Pagunsan in the third round of play at the Binitin course in the town of Murcia.

The supposed infraction came on the 10th hole when Pagunsan supposedly putted with his caddy standing in his line of play, which is not allowed under the rules and merits a two-stroke penalty.

Rulesman Jake Ayson, who is also the executive director of the National Golf Association of the Philippines, slapped the penalty and reportedly told tournament director Buddy Resurreccion later that Lim confirmed the caddy's infraction.

"I never said that," said Lim. "As a matter of fact, I told Jake on the 11th tee that his (Pagunsan's) caddy was not in his line of play."

For his part, Opaco said he was not in a position to confirm the violation because he did not see it, although he said his caddy told him that Pagunsan's caddy was watching from a legal angle.

Brobio was the one who called for a rulesman after Pagunsan stroked his putt on the par-3 hole. With the two-stroke penalty, Pagunsan got a zero on the hole.

The incident and another that allowed Southwoods to escape with another two-stroke penalty became a bone of contention after Southwoods won the PAL Interclub over Canlubang by only two points.

In the case of Pagunsan, the standard rule, according to Resurreccion, calls for the player to be given the benefit of the doubt when the issue becomes a question of one player's word against another.

He added that while the tournament committee has the power to reverse all decisions by its rulesmen, it did not do so because "there was nothing to be reversed due to the lack of a formal complaint."

Ayson was also the same rulesman, who declared that Hanson So Jr. of Southwoods found his ball he

PAL/ A26

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Altas dethrone Admirals; Lady Eagles triumph

By Marc Anthony Reyes

DUMAGUETE CITY—Sweet revenge.

University of Perpetual Help-Rizal got back at defending champion Philippine Maritime Institute via a dramatic 72-69 overtime triumph to wrest the 2005 National Students seniors championship before a sellout crowd at the Lamberto Macias Gym.

The victory, the Altas' first ever here, was all the more memorable because it was fashioned out at about the same time the Altas' head coach Bay Cristobal was exchanging wedding vows in Iloilo City.

"We want to offer this as a gift to coach Bay," said assistant coach Conrado Pasco, whose wards bowed to the Admirals in last year's final in Lucena City. "Finally we were able to get back at them."

It turned out to be a frustrating day for PMI as the Lady Admirals also went down to Ateneo, 55-43, in their showdown for the women's title earlier.

Placing third in the seniors division was National University, which nipped Southern City College-Zamboanga, 84-82.

Philippine Christian University actually set the tone for the emergence of new champions by dethroning juniors titlist San Beda Saturday night.

Chris Santamaria came through with a buzzer-beating, three-pointer to forge the extension at 66-all.

Perpetual MVP Noy Javier then scored three of the Altas' six points in the extra period, including a free throw off the fifth and final foul of PMI ace Larry Rodriguez with 13 seconds left for 71-69.

Santamaria tried to repeat his earlier heroics but failed this time and Jonjon Refuerzo pegged the final score by splitting his free throws, 72-69.

"We tried to find ways to attack their zone defense because that's what they used against us last year," said Pasco. "But they practically gave the game to us by playing man-to-man instead."

Rodriguez scattered a game-high 28 points but five of the eight Altas used scored in double figures led by Javier's 18 points.

Khiel Misa, who almost won it for the Altas in regulation by banging in Perpetual's last seven points, finished with 15.

Meanwhile, the Basketball Association of the Philippines announced that the Asean Universities basketball championships in June will also be held here.

The scores:

First Game (Women)

ATENEO 55—Barascoso 18, Chua 9, Villanueva 5, Caynap 5, Ngo 4, Grajales 4, Tioseco 4, Tanchi 2, Tan 0.

PMI 43—Suarez 13, Quirante 10, De Guzman 9, Romero 6, Reynaldo 4, Toniza 1, Quiambao 0, Sy 0, Montoya 0.

Quarters: 6-6, 20-11, 34-29, 55-43

Second Game

NU 84—Asoro 25, D. Catamora 10, C. Catamora 10, Malaqueno 9, Fernandez 8, Jhake 4, Mendoza 4, Dela Cruz 4, Sanchez 3, Malcontento 3, Estolano 2.

SCC 82—Cordero 25, Lanete 18, Bandaying 11, Linganay 9, Chua 8, Tan 8, Mendoza 3, Ramirez 0, Nablo 0.

Quarters: 22-21, 39-45, 66-68, 84-82

Third Game

PERPETUAL 72—Javier 18, Misa 15, Refuerzo 11, Bauzon 10, Balboa 10, Apor 7, Mendoza 1, Cuengco 0.

PMI 69—Rodriguez 28, C. Santamaria 12, Sonsona 11, Castro 7, Castillo 4, Villanueva 4, Dimagiba 2, Calimbang 1.

Quarters: 12-23, 33-32, 51-47, 66-66 (reg), 72-69

Que salvages top 10 finish despite a 78

PHUKET, Thailand—Angelo Que completely lost his sizzling form in the third round, collapsing to a six-over-par 78 Sunday to finish tied for 10th in the $500,000 Thailand Open.

QUE loses his touch.

Que, winner of the Vietnam Open last year, stumbled with two double bogeys on the front nine and two bogeys on the back to wind up at 286 in the company of Jeev Milkha Singh of India (78) and Wang Ter-chan of Taiwan (71).

It was a disappointing windup for Que, who started with rounds of 71-70 before shooting a five-birdie, no-bogey 67 Saturday to move within a stroke of the leaders going into the final round.

Richard Lee of New Zealand rallied with a two-under 70 on the Blue Canyon course to tie Scott Barr of Australia (72) after 72 holes at 279.

Que, ranked 14th in the Asian Order of Merit with earnings of $27,054.69 so far, hit the turn at four over following back-to-back double bogeys on five and six.

He lost ground further with bogeys on the 12th and 14th although he is expected to move up in the overall race with his top 10 finish.

Filipino Felix (Cassius) Casas ,wound up in a six-way deadlock for 57th place with a 77--296.

Meanwhile, Jenny Rosales, who won last week's SBS Open in Hawaii, withdrew for still unknown reason after shooting a two-over-par 74 in the first round of the MasterCard Classic in Mexico.

PAL flightmate ...

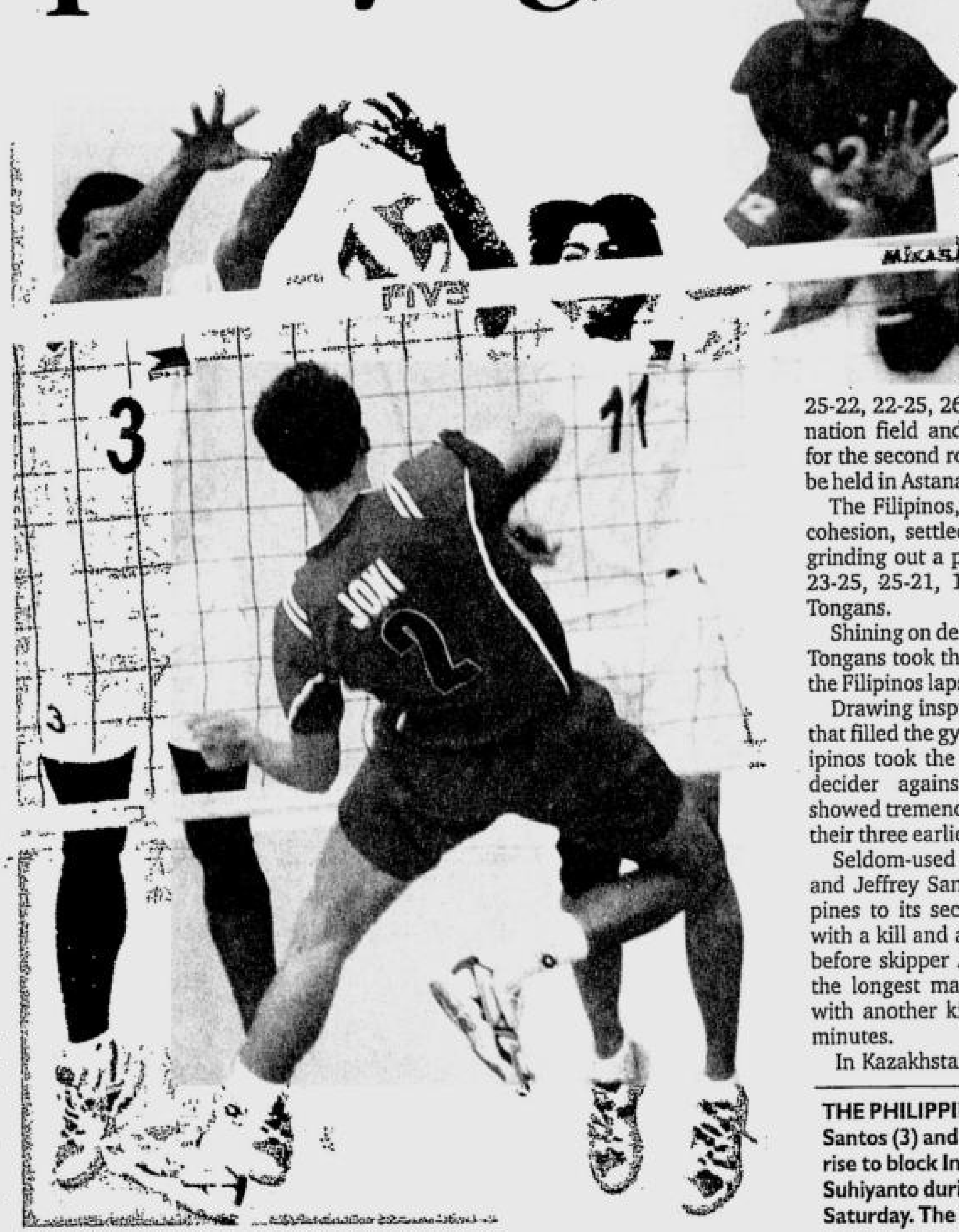
From page A25

hit from the 15th tee after a search of only four minutes and 50 seconds. Former Canlubang star Tommy Manotoc claimed the ball was found way past the allowed five minutes.

The penalty for a lost ball is two strokes. So went on to par the hole for two points.

"With a clear conscience, I stand by my decision(s)," Ayson said after the round Friday.

Chinese-Taipei rules world qualifying; RP clinches 3rd



THE PHILIPPINES' Cesael delos Santos (3) and Beniamor Lingat (11) rise to block Indonesian Joni Suhiyanto during their match last Saturday. The Indons prevailed.

By Roy Luarca

CEBU CITY—A thin line separates Chinese Taipei from Indonesia. A bigger gap exists between them, the Philippines and the rest of the field in the Men's Volleyball World Championship Asia Pool C qualifying that ended at the University of San Carlos Gym here yesterday.

The Taiwanese, showing why they're world-ranked, bested the Indonesians, the perennial regional champions, 25-17, 25-22, 22-25, 26-24, to sweep the five-nation field and emerge top qualifier for the second round of eliminations to be held in Astana, Kazakhstan, in June.

The Filipinos, lacking in ceiling and cohesion, settled for third place after grinding out a pulsating 25-27, 25-20, 23-25, 25-21, 15-12 victory over the Tongans.

Shining on defense, the taller, bulkier Tongans took the first and third sets as the Filipinos lapsed into errors.

Drawing inspiration from 5,200 fans that filled the gym to the rafters, the Filipinos took the fourth set, forcing the decider against the Tongans, who showed tremendous improvement from their three earlier losses.

Seldom-used setter Janley Patrona and Jeffrey San Jose lifted the Philippines to its second win in four starts with a kill and an ace for a 14-11 lead, before skipper Ariel de la Cruz sealed the longest match of the tournament with another kill after 1 hour and 43 minutes.

In Kazakhstan, the Taiwanese, rated 36th worldwide, will be bracketed with the hosts, the South Koreans and two other squads.

Indonesia wound up second with a 3-win, 1-loss card and also advanced to another second round qualifier against China, host India and two other teams.

Asian Games veteran Hsien Chen-lin presided over the Taiwanese assault with 28 points and combined with Lien Chien-chih to overhaul a six-point deficit in the fourth set.

"We have a very tight game today," said Chinese Taipei coach Mu San Chang. "It's our first game against Indonesia but we are confident of beating them from the start."

Chang, however, praised the Indons, who are unranked in the world despite being six-time Southeast Asian Games champions.

"They (Indons) are good and I think they will also play good in the second round," said Chang. "They have a good defense and I'm sure they can put up a good fight against China and India."

After taking the first two sets, the Taiwanese ran smack against the Indons' defensive wall composed of six-footers Muhammad Zainudin, Nyoman Rudi Tirtana and Rudy Santoso.

The tournament was sponsored by the Philippine Sports Commission, SuperFerry and 2Go, Bacchus Energy Drink, PCSO, Cebu Visitors and Conventions Bureau, Sogo Hotel, Trapik.com, Air Philippines, Speed Magazine, Pepsi, Gatorade and White Beauty Phils.

Advice to Erik Morales, from Sugar Ray

BARE EYE

Recah Trinidad

SUGAR Ray Leonard said it very, very subtly.

The sweet-punching legend took extra care not to offend.

Leonard could've told Manny Pacquiao to play it smart, box intelligently when they met on Thursday at the Wild Card Boxing Club.

In grade school parlance, that's as harsh as telling the dumb kid to "Use your coconut, damn it." If you can't, "Better go home and plant *camote*."

Leonard, however, played it like a concerned father.

He merely motioned with his index finger to deliver his message.

"You should also use this," said Leonard as quoted by Winchell Campos in California.

Campos said Leonard "pointed to his head to indicate that half of the battles on top of the ring are won because of mental preparation and toughness."

Campos said Pacquiao nodded meekly in complete concurrence.

***

Well, as had been previously noted, Pacquiao may not feel very comfortable with what Leonard had offered.

No, I did not say Pacquiao is not a thinking fighter.

He may not be as heady as, say, Leonard or Erik Morales, but he has also learned to box intelligently through the years.

But, more than his head, Pacquiao will be riding on his blazing fists when he clashes with Morales in Las Vegas 12 days from now.

Pacquiao has stopped six of his last seven opponents starting in 2002.

Morales, on the other hand, had only three knockouts in eight fights starting in 2002.

Morales also suffered twin losses (on points) against Marco Antonio Barrera during that period.

The only black mark, if it could be called such, for Pacquiao was the drawn bout against Juan Manuel Marquez who escaped with the aid of faulty scoring last May.

***

Pacquiao is clearly ahead in the knockout department.

But not everybody is happy at the wild manner his camp has been hyping Pacquiao's supposed edge over Morales.

In fact, fight expert Hermie Rivera had reason to suggest Morales must not be fazed by the taunts from Pacquiao and his handlers.

Said Señor Rivera, who has turned master texter overnight: "Despite the insistence of Manny's horde of a quick ending in his favor when he takes on terrible Erik, a conclusive ending is likely to happen in the late rounds. Morales will show up for his assigned March 19 shootout with Pacquiao-hype notwithstanding. It will be a terrific battle (no mismatch for sure). Hope Manny will check in fully armed (as you've repeatedly assured) with the right pair of socks this time."

Now, as the countdown for the Pacquiao-Morales encounter nears, fans should be sending Sugar Ray a thank-you note.

Why? Because Pacquiao, seasoned as he may be, also tends to drop his guard when he starts to lash at his foe inside the ring.

He has the tendency to lose his head, so to say, thereby making the Leonard tip very timely.

***

In my case, I could only thank journalist Winchell Campos who has painstakingly stuck to Pacquiao.

The most delicious details of Pacquiao's close encounter with Sugar Ray Leonard could've escaped an ordinary scribe.

But Campos was not the sort to drop his guard before world celebrities.

He did not blink. In fact, he has generously offered vital details from the Pacquiao camp in the run-up to the monumental March 19 showdown.

Anyway, if Campos could find time, he may ask Leonard what he could advise Erik Morales.

Knowing Leonard, he's not expected to offer the same tip he had given Pacquiao.

This is just a guess. But I feel Leonard would tell Morales: Wield a bigger punch, man.

Show up with an axe, if you can, not with pins and lancets.

Maybe Leonard should explain that it does not always pay for a boxer to be too brainy in front of a certified executioner.

It's a war, not a plain debate, Morales will have against the fire-breathing Pacquiao.

It won't be a waltz.

It pays to think and rock-and-roll at the same time.

LADIES FED GOLF

Tagaytay Highlands gets back at MGC

Standings:

Group I: Orchard 3-0-0, Tagaytay Highlands 2-0-2, Manila Golf 1-0-3, Riviera 1-0-2

Group II: Sta. Elena 2-1-0, Forest Hills 1-0-1, Southwoods 1-1-1, Valley 0-0-2

TAGAYTAY Highlands exacted sweet revenge on Manila Golf Club with a rousing 3-0 sweep at home recently to move closer to a semifinals berth in the inaugural Ladies Federation Golf League matches.

All three matches didn't go farther than the 14th hole as the Highlanders notched their second win in four games and moved up to second behind unbeaten Orchard in Group I.

Maline Flores and Veronica Veloso-Wilson set the tone for the lopsided win by finishing off their aggregate rivals, Malu Gamboa-Esther Sallee, in just 11 holes for an 8-and-7 victory.

The two other tandems fielded by Tagaytay captain Jim Reyes blended well in the series sponsored by Prudential Bank, Justine Sebastian/Cathay Land Inc., Citibank NA and Schering Plough-Coppertone.

Marixi Prieto and Mabek Kawsek nailed the tie-clinching second win for Tagaytay with a 6-and-4 rout of Rosanna Fores and Baby Puno in the alternate shots before Farah Imperial and Linel de Villa put the icing on the cake with an equally dominating 5-and-4 victory over Aileen Litonjua and Helen Cruz in the high-low format.

Tagaytay lost to Manila Golf, 2-1, when it visited the Forbes Park course before taking a heartbreaking defeat to Orchard last week. It had earlier beaten Riviera for its first win.

It was the only tie played during the week as the rest of the teams opted to move their games to a later date due to pressing commitments.

Pangan aces Villamor's No. 4

BANKER Romeo G. Pangan scored a hole-in-one on the par-3 No. 4 of the Villamor Golf Club in Pasay City on Feb. 25. Playing in a mini tournament, Pangan used an R5 TaylorMade 3-wood and a Pinnacle 4 ball. Pangan was in the second flight that included Regie Casas and Jimmy Mueco. Other participants in the mini tournament were Eric Angeles, Armand Batalla, Gene de Guzman, Jojo Casas, Jonathan de Leon, Aries Olegario and Gene Galvez.

New Balance Power Race 4th leg in May

AFTER a successful third staging of the New Balance Power Race last November, Planet Sports Inc., distributor of New Balance shoes and sportswear, is looking forward to a bigger and better marathon this year.

The fourth installment of this foot race, which is shaping up to be one of the country's premiere running events, will hit the road at the Bonifacio Global City in Taguig on May 29.

More than 3,000 competitors and enthusiasts took part in the event last year including the country's marathon recordholders Eduardo Buenavista and Christabel Martes, who ruled the centerpiece 25 K Power race.

This time, according to marketing director Ronnie Colmenar, New Balance is targeting 4,000 runners, most of whom are expected to compete in the shorter 10K and 5K distances.

At stake is P239,000 in cash and gift certificates with the winner of the 25-K event taking home P25,000. The second and third placers will pocket P15,000 and P10,000, respectively.

Registration fees are P250 for the New Balance 25K Power Race, and P150 for the 10K and 5K races. All participants will be issued the much-talked about New Balance running singlets.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Valle in finals vs Taiwanese

Teenage prodigy ousts Gabica

By June Navarro

SINGAPORE—The Philippines' Gandy Valle stunned Yang Ching-shun, 11-8, and averted an all-Taiwanese championship clash in the San Miguel Asian 9-Ball Tour Finals at the Suntec Exhibition Hall here.

The underdog Valle thus forged a titular match with 16-year-old pool prodigy Wu Chia-ching, who downed Filipino Antonio Gabica, 12-10, in the other semifinal duel.

The 32-year-old Gabica yielded to Wu after earlier booting out his legendary compatriot Efren "Bata" Reyes in the quarterfinals of Asia's premier 9-ball tournament.

Gabica scratched in the final two racks, opening the door for Wu to clean up on both occasions and march into the $10,000 race-to-13 final.

Known as the little king of nine-ball back home, Wu faces the winner of the Yang Ching-shun-Gandy Valle match that is still being played at presstime.

"It was very unfortunate," said Gabica, who settled for the $3,000 (P162,000) prize. "I had victory within my grasp."

GABICA: Tough luck

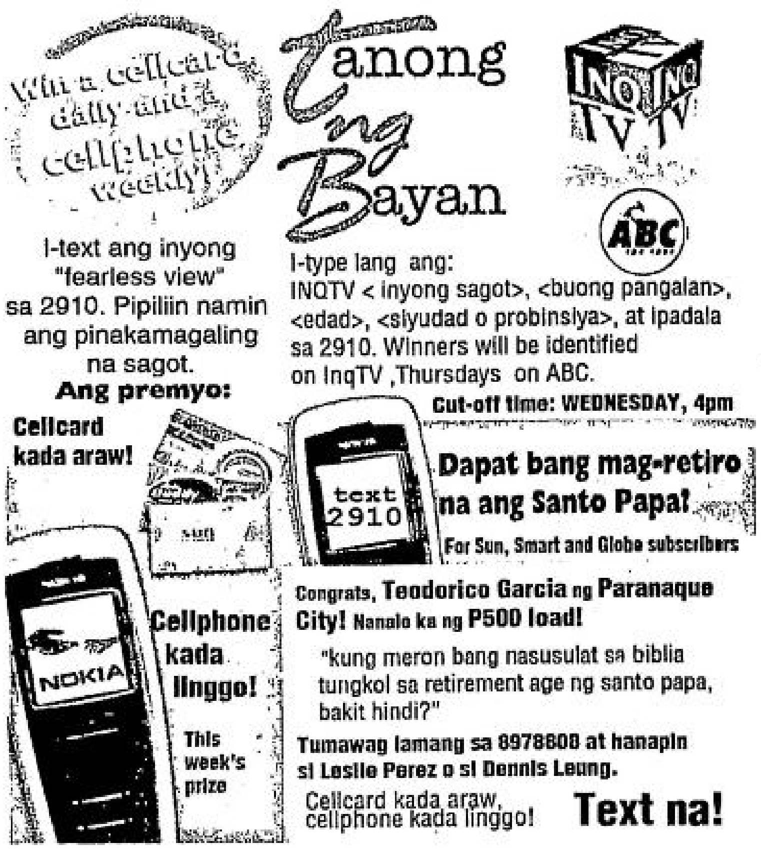
Wu scored three straight racks to break a 6-6 deadlock. Gabica, who cashed in on Wu's miscalculation on the fourth ball in the 16th and on a good break in the 17th, took the next two sets to pull within, 8-9.

But the Filipino scratched in the 18th, allowing Wu to sweep the rack.

Gabica scratched again on the break in the 21st followed by another miscue in the final rack.

Earlier, Gabica mastered Reyes anew with a 9-4 win Saturday night, eliminating the Filipino top seed in the semifinals. Gabica also downed the country's top cue master in the Hope P1-million All-Filipino 9-Ball Open last month.

Francisco "Django" Bustamante also succumbed later in the night after allowing Chinese-Taipei's Yang Ching-shun to get out of a 0-6 hole. Yang seized nine of the last 10 racks to prevail, 9-7.



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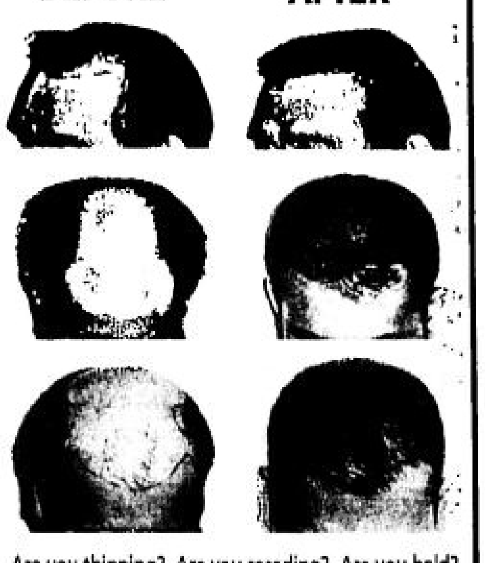

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NAT'L FOOTBALL

Davao comes from behind to stun Iloilo

CAGAYAN DE ORO CITY—Davao overcame the blistering heat and favored Iloilo, 3-1, Sunday to join opening-day winner Laguna on top of Group A in the 2005 PFF-Adidas National Men's Championship at the Don Gregorio Pelaez Sports Center here.

The come-from-behind win came after Iloilo's Bervic Italia converted a penalty kick off a foul by sweeper Alexis Catipay in the 42nd minute.

The Davaoeños were clearly the better side after the break and their offensive adjustments paid off when Allan Rey Fernandez booted the game-tying marker in the 56th minute.

GAMES TODAY
(Pelaez Sports Center)
7:30 a.m.—CdO-MO vs Iloilo
9:30 a.m.—Laguna vs Davao
2 p.m.—Quezon vs Zamboanga
4 p.m.—Negros vs NCR

Andylyn Estimo scored the go-ahead for Davao in the 68th before Evilito Mortillero put the outcome beyond doubt with a nifty goal in the 88th.

"Goalie's lapses did us in," rued Iloilo coach Leo Viejon.

"*Talagang ganun 'pag masyadong mainit ang araw* (That happens when the sun's out and it's hot)," said Davao coach Rafael Vilela. "*Bibigay na* (You'll give in) mentally *'pag naunahan ng puntos sa* (You'll give in if the other side beats you to the goal in the) second half. Now we're looking at Laguna as our toughest test in Group A."

In Saturday's lone match, Laguna banked on a wild shot by Richmond Braga in the last two minutes to frustrate an estimated 5,000 crowd that packed the main grandstand to cheer for host Cagayan de Oro-Misamis Oriental.

Braga wiggled out of a phalanx of defenders in the goalmouth to flick in the game-winner.

Title favorites National Capital Region and Negros Occidental were still playing at presstime against Zamboanga and Quezon, respectively.

Japan's Inada lifts Laurente's OPBF crown

DENNIS Laurente lost his Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation lightweight title by split decision to arch rival Inada Chikashi of Japan in their 12-round showdown Saturday at the Korakuen Hall in Tokyo, Japan.

Laurente, making the fourth defense of his title, could not make a definitive tactic against Inada as the Japanese "kept jabbing to find the range and rhythm to win three rounds in the first four," reported Japanese boxing journalist Joe Koizumi.

Scoring referee Anek Hongtongkam of Thailand had Inada winning by 116-111 and Takashi Shimakawa of Japan concurred with a 117-113. Filipino judge Edwin Sese favored Laurente, 115-112.

In the undercard, Ichitaro Ishii (12-1-1, 12 KOs) bucked a second-round knockdown to stop Filipino lightweight Fernando Montilla in the sixth round. *Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor*

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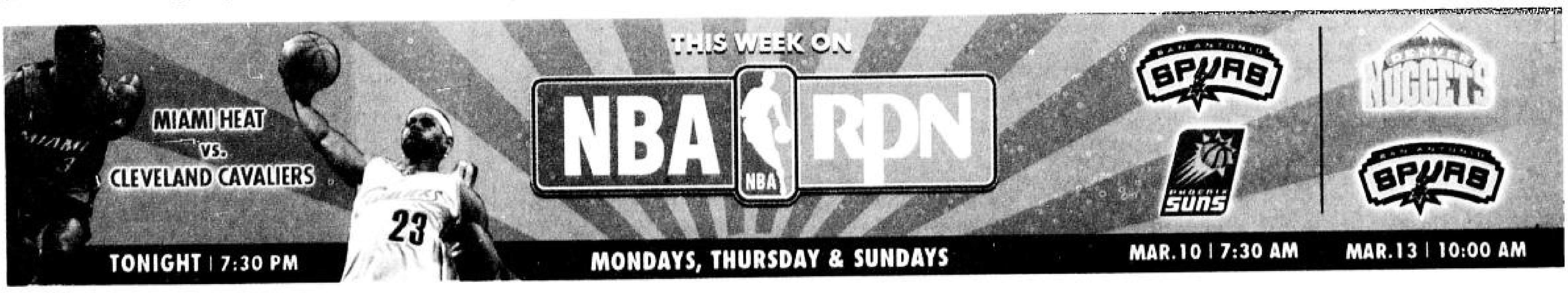


THIS WEEK ON
NBA RPN
MIAMI HEAT vs. CLEVELAND CAVALIERS
TONIGHT | 7:30 PM
MONDAYS, THURSDAY & SUNDAYS
SPURS
SUNS
MAR.10 | 7:30 AM
NUGGETS
SPURS
MAR.13 | 10:00 AM

Mickelson, Woods set Doral duel

MIAMI—Phil Mickelson continued to bully the Blue Monster with a 6-under 66 and Tiger Woods put on a dynamic charge with a 9-under 63 Saturday to leave him only two shots behind after the third round of the Ford Championship.

The performances by two of golf's most popular players will pit the pair against one another in the final group on Sunday, their first head-to-head showdown in two years.

"We both know we're going to have to make a bunch of birdies," Woods said.

Woods overwhelmed the back nine with his power, no shot more memorable than when he drove the green on the 347-yard 16th, ending 45 feet from the pin for a two-putt birdie.

Mickelson was at 20-under 196, the 10th consecutive round in stroke play he has been atop the leaderboard.

Zach Johnson, who had to pull out of the pro-am with a bad back, shot a 64 and was six shots behind at 14-under 202, along with James Driscoll (67) and defending champion Craig Parry (67).

Vijay Singh couldn't keep pace with a 68 and was seven shots behind, joined by two-time Masters champion Jose Maria Olazabal (70) and former US Open champion Jim Furyk (67).

But the attention was on Woods and Mickelson, who last played in the final group at the 2003 Buick Invitational. Woods went on to win by four, with Mickelson six shots behind.

On Saturday, Woods had six birdies, finishing his round with an 8-footer on the 18th and in a television interview wished happy birthday to his father, Earl, who turned 73 on Saturday.

With blue skies, warm sunshine and a leaderboard packed with the best players in golf, the galleries packed the Doral Golf Resort and Spa-Blue Course, standing six deep at the putting green.

They were rewarded with play such as Mickelson's perfectly judged wedge out of the rough that hopped forward to 6 feet for birdie on No. 5, the start of three in a row. Mickelson led between four and five shots for much of the round.

"He's on a rampage," Johnson said. "It's fun to watch if you're a spectator; kind of stinks if you're part of it."

Woods became a big part of it with tremendous shots along the back nine.

He hammered his 3-wood about 270 yards just over the flag, setting up an easy up-and-down for birdie from just off the green at 10. With another big 3-wood, this one from 262 yards into a stiff breeze, Woods became the first player all week to reach the 603-yard 12th hole in two for another birdie.

Then came the 16th, where the tees were moved up 25 yards to tempt players to drive the green. Woods didn't realize he reached the green until he was halfway up the fairway.

"No one clapped," Woods said. "We didn't have any clue. I just knew I hit it in the direction of the green."

The roars rocked the Blue Monster, but Mickelson didn't blink.

He nearly holed a chip from an awkward lie on the par-5 10th for a tap-in birdie, and picked up another birdie on the par-5 12th with a pitch into 6 feet. *AP*

WOODS: Tremendous shots AP

MICKELSON: On a rampage AFP

Wizards nip Bobcats

CHARLOTTE, North Carolina—Laron Profit tipped in Juan Dixon's miss with 3.1 seconds to play to give the Washington Wizards an 86-84 victory over the Charlotte Bobcats on Saturday night.

The Bobcats missed twice before Washington's final possession. Jason Kapono's shot was off, and Gerald Wallace's shot was blocked by Brendan Haywood. The Wizards called timeout and ran down the clock before getting the ball to Dixon in the left corner. His shot bounced off the rim, but Profit was under the basket and tipped it in.

Haywood scored 22 points for Washington, which broke its six-game road losing streak.

In East Rutherford, New Jersey, Steve Francis scored 26 points and rookie backcourt mate Jameer Nelson added a career-high 22 as the Orlando Magic took an early lead and blew out the Nets, 105-81.

Kelvin Cato added 16 points for the Magic, who had four players in double figures. Nelson, further entrenched in the Orlando starting lineup after Doug Christie was placed on the injured list, shot 7-of-9 and had three assists.

In Atlanta, Marc Jackson hit a pair of freethrows with 1.2 seconds remaining, and Allen Iverson stole the Hawks' ensuing inbounds pass as the Philadelphia 76ers extended the Atlanta's losing streak to 11 games with a heart-stopping 98-97 victory.

Iverson, who hit all 13 of his freethrow attempts, scored 33 points but was just 3-for-19 from the floor in the second half.

The Sixers won two straight for the first time since acquiring Chris Webber in a Feb. 23 deal with Sacramento. Webber finished with 18 points and a team-high eight rebounds.

In Milwaukee, Desmond Mason scored 20 points, Maurice Williams and Michael Redd added 16 points each and the Bucks defeated the Chicago Bulls in Milwaukee for the 14th consecutive time, 95-87.

The Bulls' losing streak at the Bradley Center dates to March 29, 1998, the year Michael Jordan led the team to the last of its six NBA championships.

In Phoenix, Shawn Marion had 26 points and nine rebounds, and the Suns routed the Portland Trail Blazers for the third time this season, 129-116.

Coach Mike D'Antoni rested starters Marion, Amare Stoudemire and Steve Nash for the entire fourth quarter after the Suns went ahead, 102-78, after three.

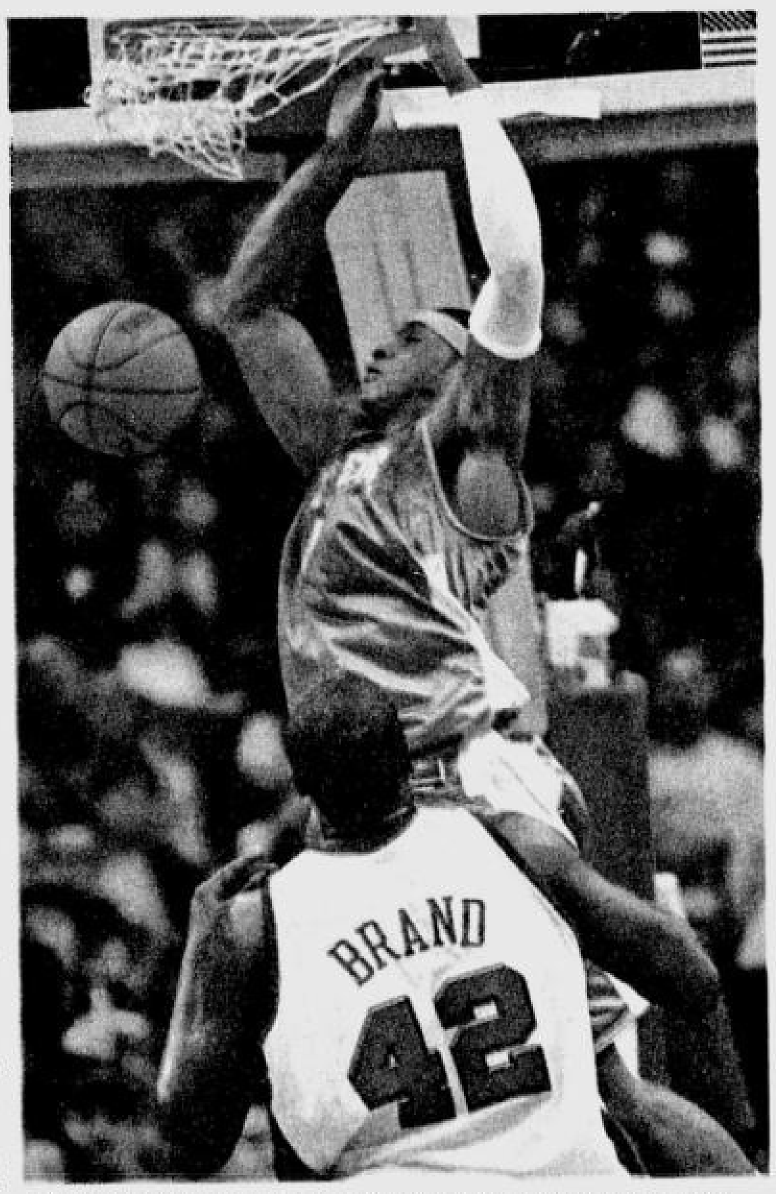
Stoudemire contributed 20 points, but Nash saw his string of 11-assist games snapped at 12.

In Los Angeles, Earl Boykins scored 12 of his 22 points in the fourth quarter as the Denver Nuggets continued their push for the playoffs under new coach George Karl with their sixth straight victory, a 105-89 rout of the Clippers.

Boykins, a guard who spent two seasons with the Clippers, has scored in double figures in 20 of his last 23 games and has four 20-point efforts during that stretch.

Carmelo Anthony had 21 points for the Nuggets, who equaled their longest winning streak since a seven-game stretch from Nov. 18-Dec. 2, 1989. They improved to 30-29 and went over .500 for the first time since Dec. 21 (13-12).

The Nuggets have made up 6 1/2 games on the Lakers for the eighth and final Western Conference playoff berth, and have tied them with 23 games remaining. *AP*



CARMELO Anthony of the Denver Nuggets soars for a dunk over forward Elton Brand of the Los Angeles Clippers. AFP

Sportswriter's grandma passes away

TRINIDAD Nepales Saguit, grandmother of STAR sportswriter Joey Villar, passed away Saturday. She was 85. Her remains lie in state at the family's residence in San Miguel, Oas, Albay. Interment will be announced later.

Tierro loses as RP Cuppers bow out

SOUTH Korea, building on a big doubles win the day before, clinched the first reverse singles to win the first round of the Asia-Oceania Zone Group II Davis Cup tie against host Philippines at the Philippine Columbian Association (PCA) shell-clay indoor courts.

Jun Wook-sun, unveiling a vast array of weapons, crushed Philippine No. 1 Patrick John Tierro in straight sets, 6-3, 6-3, 6-3, in one hour and 55 minutes to give Korea an unbeatable 3-1 lead.

The Koreans settled for a final 3-2 win as Johnny Arcilla beat Suk Hyun-joon, 6-3, 7-5, in the no-bearing fifth match.

The victory pushed the Koreans to the next round against the winner of Pacific Oceania and Lebanon. Pacific Oceania led, 2-0, as of Friday.

"Patrick had a big heart," said Beeyong Sison, Tierro's personal trainer and a former Davis Cupper and non-playing captain.

"He is still in the development stage. At least he gained experience in such a big international event like this."

"We plan to give Patrick 20 or 30 weeks of international training exposure," added Sison.

Tierro broke the ice for the Philippine team, demolishing Suk in three sets, 7-5, 7-5 and 6-4, Friday.

But Arcilla fell to Jun, who needed five sets to pull through, 4-6, 6-3, 6-7 (7), 6-4 and 4-6.

The tandem of Arcilla and Roland Ruel, who had never played together before, bowed to the team of Chung Hee-seok and Kim Dong-hyun, 6-4, 6-0, 6-0.

Arcilla was a last-minute replacement for Joseph Victorino, a doubles specialist who had sore eyes.

In other Group II ties, Pakistan beat Thailand, 3-2; Taiwan nipped Japan, 3-2, while India blanked China, 5-0.

Pakistan pulled through as Aisamul Haq upset world-rated Paradorn Srichapan, 7-5, 2-6, 6-4, 6-4, for an unassailable 3-1 advantage after the first reverse singles.

Annika just 3 behind

HUIXQUILUCAN, Mexico—Annika Sorenstam shot a 1-under 71 Saturday, to move within three strokes of leader Cristie Kerr after two rounds of the MasterCard Classic.

Sorenstam was 3 under through 14, but double-bogeyed 15 to eventually drop to fourth at 141.

Kerr, who finished second last week at the SBS Open in Hawaii, took the lead after sinking six birdies Saturday—four of them on the back nine. She also had a pair of bogeys to move to 6-under 138.

Kerr said she had a secret system for adjusting her shots to the high-altitude at the Bosque Real in Huixquilucan. *AP*

Castillo jumper lifts Purefoods

From page A25

away with the game earlier after taking an early double-digit lead, 20-10.

Miller, the Express' highly touted 6-9 reinforcement, kept attacking at the paint to extend the lead to 19 points, 40-21, early in the second quarter.

Miller posted big numbers at halftime—14 points and 17 rebounds—but he vanished offensively in the second half.

The scores:

PUREFOODS 92—Smith 22, Castillo 17, Yap 16, Raymundo 12, Limpot 11, Laure 5, Espinosa 4, Evangelista 3, Yee 2, Artadi 0, Simon 0, Hrabak 0.

FEDEX 90—Ritualo 24, Miller 20, Ferriols 18, Dacia 14, Pingris 12, De Ocampo 2, Gonzales 0, Victolero 0, Billones 0, Codiñera 0, Arboleda 0.

Quarters: 19-34, 32-46, 63-71, 92-90

Second Game

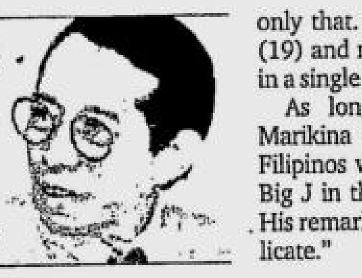
RED BULL 93—Johnson 25, Tugade 20, Bagulo 15, Villanueva 13, Meneses 7, Ybañez 5, Bernardo 4, Robinson 2, Torion 2, Asaytono 0, Ejercito 0, Valenzuela 0, Gahol 0.

GINEBRA 86—Caguioa 32, Elisma 22, Menk 11, Echavez 7, Santos 7, Adducul 4, Seigle 3, Salvacion 0, Dimaunahan 0.

Quarters: 25-11, 41-32, 57-63, 93-86.

Why did basketball officials 'snub' Jaworski?

CLEAN LIVING



Manolo R. Iñigo

STRANGE times. I never thought I'd see the day when basketball pashas would fail to include Robert Jaworski in their list of consultants to the Philippine team that is competing in several international tournaments, including the Jones Cup and the ABC (now Fiba-Asia Championship), in the hope of qualifying for the 2008 Beijing Olympics.

Did Jaworski beg off? If he did not, why did cage officials exclude him from the elite roster of consultants that included Norman Black, Tim Cone and Jong Uichico who, like Jaworski, also coached PBA teams that represented the Philippines in the Asian Games starting in 1990?

Coach Chot Reyes should have tapped Jaworski for the job not only because he has the best record among the PBA coaches in the Asiad, but also because he is respected by the players who consider him the greatest Filipino basketeer of all time, an honor the Big J shares with the renowned Carlos Loyzaga.

In the 1990 Asian Games in Beijing, Jaworski coached the Philippine team that won the silver medal behind host country China. The Philippines, with Black calling the shots, landed fourth in the 1994 Asiad in Hiroshima; placed third in Bangkok in 1998 under Cone and finished fourth in Busan in 2002 under Uichico.

A former senator, Jaworski, who will turn 59 tomorrow (he was born in Baguio City on March 8, 1946) boasts an impressive record in more than three decades of playing in both the defunct Manila Industrial Commercial Athletic Association and the Philippine Basketball Association. He played for the national team in the Asian Games starting in 1966 in Bangkok and made his last stint in the Asiad in 1974 in Tehran. The 6-foot-1 Jaworski, the only son of Polish-American Teodore Jaworski and Iluminada Salazar, also saw action in the 1968 Mexico Olympics and spearheaded the Philippines to victory in the 1973 ABC championship held in Manila.

Aptly called the "Living Legend" of Philippine basketball, Jaworski made his PBA debut in 1975 and retired in 1999 at the age of 52, the oldest man ever to play professional basketball anywhere in the world.

The Big J first tantalized basketball-batty Filipinos in the UAAP in the '60s as a key player of the multititled University of the East Warriors coached by the fabled Virgilio "Baby" Dalupan. In the Micaa, Jaworski shone for powerhouse teams like YCO, Meralco and Toyota, playing under much-respected coaches, among them Leo Prieto and Dante Silverio, who also became household names in the PBA.

In the PBA, Jaworski became a big hit among the fans, notably among Ginebra diehards, chiefly because of his patented never-say-die attitude.

He won four PBA titles and set several league records during his prime, including the most number of assists (5,768) with an average of 6.1 assists per game. He was sixth in overall scores (11,710); third in steals (932); fourth in rebounds (5,292); third in games played (938); and fourth in three-point shots made (641). Not only that. The Big J also had the most assists (19) and most number of three-point shots (8) in a single game.

As longtime contributor Paul Mortel of Marikina City said, "Indeed, all sports-loving Filipinos will be proud to see the name of the Big J in the Guinness Book of World Records. His remarkable record will be very hard to duplicate."

***

TOLL FEE HIKE UNDER FIRE. As a regular motorist using the North Luzon Expressway (NLEX), I agree with the multisectoral group that recently filed a complaint against the Tollways Management Corp. for imposing an "unreasonable" increase in toll fee.

In a complaint filed before the Toll Regulatory Board, lawyer Pete Principe, former governor of the Integrated Bar of the Philippines in Central Luzon, said, "The increase in toll fee is arbitrary, oppressive, inequitable and capricious. It is a heavy burden not only to the petitioners but also to the thousands of motorists using the North Luzon Expressway."

Besides Principe, the other petitioners are trial lawyers Jose dela Rama Jr., Vic Bordador, Juan Bañez, who represent the lawyers sector; Judges Oscar Herrera Jr. and Manuel Siayngco, who represent the Confederation of Bulacan Judges, and Bulacan State University president Dr. Rosario Pimentel, who represents the different universities and colleges in Luzon.

Petitioners said in their complaint that the excessive increase in toll fee is now causing economic disturbance among our people because it caused the increase of the prices of basic commodities such as vegetables, rice and other essential needs which are being transported daily through the North Luzon Expressway.

Slovakia knocks Davis crown off Spain's head

LONDON—Spain was ousted from the Davis Cup on Saturday, just two days into its title defense.

The defending champions were playing without three of their top players, and even the appearance of teenage star Rafael Nadal wasn't enough as Slovakia won the doubles match to take an insurmountable 3-0 lead.

Australia and Argentina also advanced to the quarterfinals Saturday.

Karol Beck and Michal Mertinak, playing doubles together in the Davis Cup for the first time, beat Albert Costa and Nadal, 7-6 (3), 6-4, 7-6 (8), at the National Tennis Center in Bratislava to give Slovakia the unlikely win.

"We are all heroes," said Beck, who also won the opening singles match on Friday.

The last time Slovakia made it this far was in 2000, when it lost to Brazil, 3-2.

"The Spaniards fought hard, which is not seen often," Slovakia captain Milos Mecir said.

Spain, which beat the United States to win its second Davis Cup just three months ago, was playing without Carlos Moya, Tommy Robredo and Juan Carlos Ferrero.

Australia advanced with a 3-0 win over Austria. Veterans Wayne Arthurs and Todd Woodbridge beat Austria's Julian Knowle and Jurgen Melzer, 4-6, 6-3, 2-6, 6-4, 7-5.

In Moscow, Marat Safin and Mikhail Youzhny beat Fernando Gonzalez and Adrian Garcia, 6-3, 6-4, 6-3, for a 2-1 lead over Chile.

In Los Angeles, Mario Ancic and Ivan Ljubicic moved Croatia within a victory of the quarterfinals, combining for a 3-6, 7-6 (8), 6-4, 6-4 victory over twin brothers Bob and Mike Bryan of the United States. Ancic and Ljubicic had 20 aces, but converted only two of nine break points before prevailing in two hours, 41 minutes and giving Croatia a 2-1 lead. *AP*

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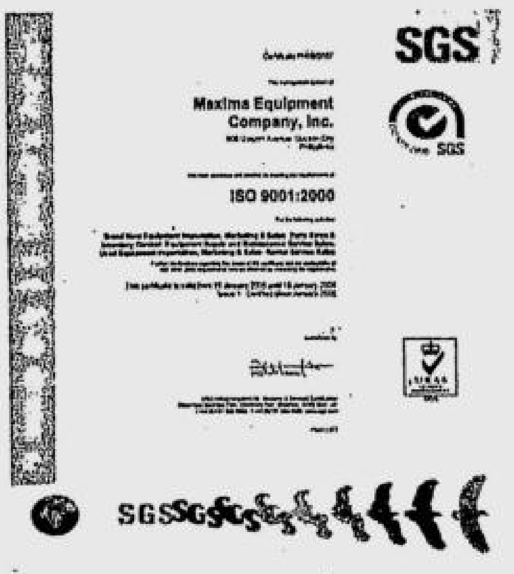
Equipment Company Incorporated
...doing it better


Maxima Equipment Company, Inc.

ISO 9001:2000

SGS

MAXIMA ISO 9001:2000 Certificate

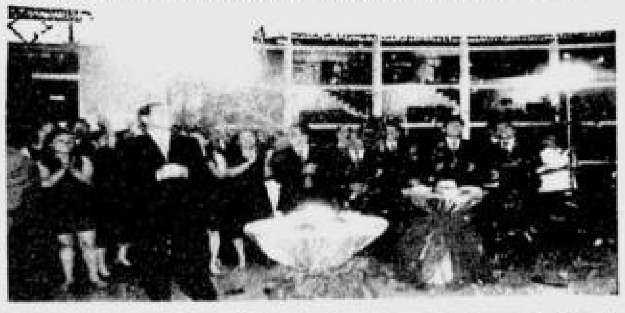
Maxima receives ISO 9001:2000 Certification for Quality Management Systems

... the first among the heavy equipment distributors in the Philippines
... the first among Komatsu distributors in the Asia Pacific Region

MAXIMA doing it better...
ISO 9001:2000 CERTIFIED

(Above photo): Maxima Equipment Co., Management Team does it better.

(Above photo): Maxima Equipment Co., Inc. President, Mr Raul Ang, receives the ISO Certification from SGS Philippines Chairman, Mr. David Robertson


(Right photo): ISO Awarding Ceremony held at Maxima Head Office

MESSAGES

MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA

I extend my warmest felicitations to the officers and staff of Maxima Equipment Co., Inc. on the inauguration of its corporate office and the 14th anniversary of its enduring partnership with Komatsu Ltd. of Japan. I congratulate you for your efforts in strengthening the heavy equipment industry by providing quality and reliable products. I hope this occasion will inspire your partnership towards more investments and business activity.

As I have pledged in my first year in the office, our immediate goal is to eradicate poverty, hopefully, within this decade. This we can achieve with the cooperation of the government, the business sector and our citizens. I commend the men and women of Maxima Equipment Co. for sharing with us the goal of a better future for our people. This goal is consistent with your company's long tradition of, and commitment to, quality products and services. May you continue to be successful in all your undertakings.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

REPUBLIKA NG PILIPINAS
LUNGSOD QUEZON

On behalf of the Quezon City Government, I join the management and staff of MAXIMA Equipment Co., Inc. exclusive distributor of Komatsu heavy equipment, on the occasion of the inauguration and blessing of your new building right in the heart of the Metro Manila's premier city. The addition of the new building in your asset portfolio manifests your improving investment potential.

Foreign and local investments provide a boost towards whole-scale development, thus improving our standard of living, most especially that of our marginalized sector

I encourage other entrepreneurs to follow your lead in trusting the capabilities of Filipinos to maintain a serene investment climate, which will promote national stability and growth. Together, let us work towards a quality community.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

FELICIANO R. BELMONTE, JR.
Quezon City Mayor

PCA

In behalf of the Philippine Constructors Association (PCA), Inc., We would like to extend our heartfelt congratulations to Maxima Equipment Company Incorporated for having achieved its ISO 9001:2000 Certification. If being the first heavy equipment distributor to have received this quality certification in the Philippines is an honor worthy of emulation, being the first Komatsu distributor to have made this achievement in the entire Southeast Asian Region makes all Filipinos proud.

Realizing the need to understand our country's level of development and readiness of local firms to compete in an open market, your company focuses on an integrated development strategy that is responsive to the global challenges we face today.

Once again, we congratulate the organization as a whole that you may continue to succeed as one of the leading providers of high quality equipment and superior after-sales services in the country.

MABUHAY!

EMILIO J. TUMBOCON
President

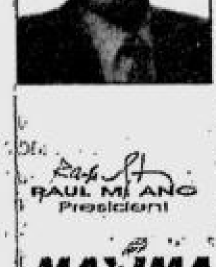
Greetings from the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industries (PCCI)! Allow me to extend my sincerest congratulations to Maxima Equipment Co. Inc. for receiving the ISO 9001:2000 Certification. This is a monumental achievement for the corporation, its employers and the country.

Since 1988 Maxima has been able to provide high-performance and reliable heavy equipment. The major projects your company has worked on for the past years positioned your company to be one of the major movers and supporters of some of the most important infrastructure projects in the Philippines. With your outstanding contributions to the Philippine Industry -- from mining to providing power to homes and businesses - you have proven to be an indispensable entity to the nation.

Customer focus, continuous improvement, process approach are among one of the significant themes in ISO 9001 2000. By awarding this certificate to Maxima, it reaffirms the company's fulfillment to its mission: To be the leader in providing quality and reliable products with excellent after sales and service support. Once again, congratulations and more power to Maxima Equipment Co. Inc.!

DONALD G. DEE
President

Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry



Pursuing the ISO 900 1 2000 certification is by far Maximas foremost instrument to achieve the company's vision and mission. With this, our current management system is now aligned with worldwide business standards. This will enable us to consistently meet our customer's requirements and enhance customer satisfaction.

Indeed being granted the certification is a milestone in the history of Maxima. More than just being certified, Maxima is the first to be certified among the heavy equipment distributors in the Philippines and also the first to be certified among the Komatsu Distributors in Asia Pacific.

Achieving this certification was not easy. The actual development of the quality management system took nine months of painstaking work beyond the normal hours, endless brains storming, voice-raising arguments and sometimes burned-out frustration. For this, I thank my management team for their untiring team effort and sacrifice in making this award possible. Allow me as well to express my gratitude to Maxima directors and shareholders in their continuous belief and support in the capability and integrity of the Maxima management team.

To our principals, trading, banking & logistics partners, thank you for continuously choosing us to be your allies and for giving us your trust and confidence.

To our valued customers, our heartfelt and sincere thanks in your continuous belief in us. Without you, there is no success to celebrate. Let me assure you our commitment of enhanced customer service as we try to do things better than before, better than others, and better than expected

Ang tagumpay na ito ay tagumpay nating lahat.
Maraming Salamat Po!

RAUL M. ANG
President

MAXIMA
Equipment Company Incorporated

BRIEF HISTORY

April 1988	- Maxima was incorporated.
June 1988	- Komatsu Ltd. (Heavy Equipment & Generator sets) of Japan appointed Maxima as their exclusive distributor in the Philippines.
January 1989	- Established Training Department to provide customer & in-house training.
May 1991	- Computerization of ordering of spare parts to Komatsu Asia & Pacific, Pte.Ltd. (KAP) Singapore.
September 1995	- Bomag GmbH (Compaction Equipment) of Germany appointed Maxima as their exclusive distributor in the Philippines.
November 1995	- Niigata Co. Ltd. (Asphalt Pavers) of Japan appointed Maxima as their exclusive distributor in the Philippines.
December 1995	- Fermec Int'l. Ltd. (Backhoe Loaders) of U.K. appointed Maxima as their exclusive dealer in the Philippines.
January 1996	- New Corporate Logo was launched.
February 1996	- Established a 9,000 sq. meter Service Facility in Valenzuela City.
March 1997	- Ditchwitch (Underground System and Equipment) appointed Maxima as their exclusive distributor in the Philippines.
April 1997	- Nishi Nihon Co.Ltd. (Engine Welders) appointed Maxima as exclusive distributor of Nishihatsu products.
July 1997	- Furukawa (Crawler Drills & Breakers) of Japan appointed Maxima as their exclusive distributor in the Philippines.
June 1998	- Computerized parts operations throughout the country.
July 1998	- Airman (Air Compressors) of Japan appointed Maxima as their exclusive distributor in the Philippines.
September 1998	- Argo (Amphivious Vehicle) appointed Maxima as exclusive distributor of their products.
November 1999	- Iveco SpA (Trucks and Buses) of Europe appointed Maxima as their exclusive dealer in the Philippines.
April 2000	- Established Used Equipment and Parts business.
September 2000	- Established Komatsu Rental business.
November 2000	- Komatsu Forklift of Singapore appointed Maxima as exclusive distributor of their products.
January 2001	- Grindex (Submersible Pumps) appointed Maxima as exclusive distributor of their products.
June 2002	- Inauguration of new Maxima building in Quezon Ave.
August 2004	- Inauguration of new Maxima Cebu Service Shop and Warehouse in Quano Ave., Mandaue City.
December 2004	- Recommended for ISO 9001:2000 Certification.

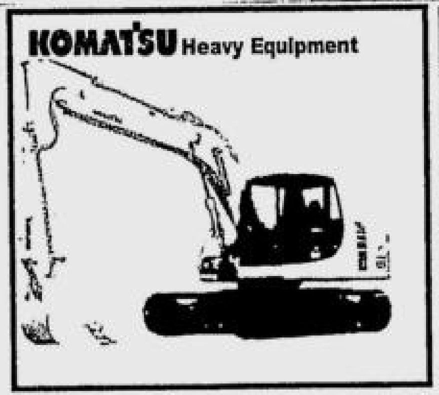
PRODUCT LINES

- •SALES
- •RENTAL
- •USED

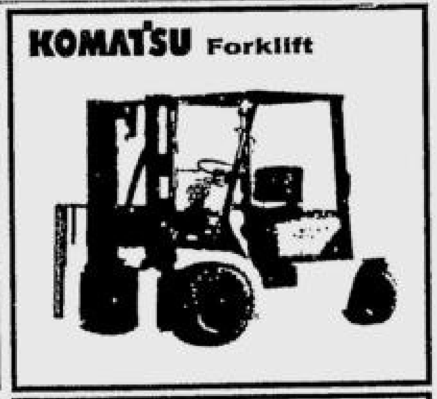
After Sales Support

Parts | Service | Training

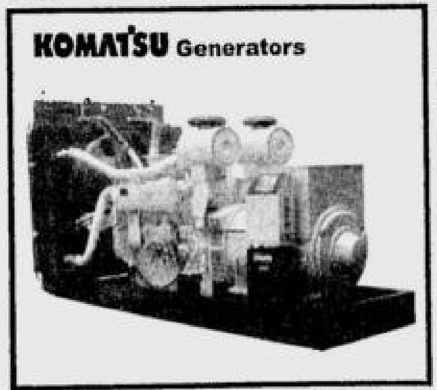
KOMATSU Heavy Equipment



KOMATSU Forklift

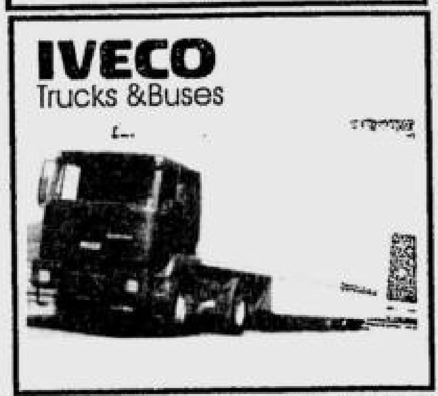


KOMATSU Generators

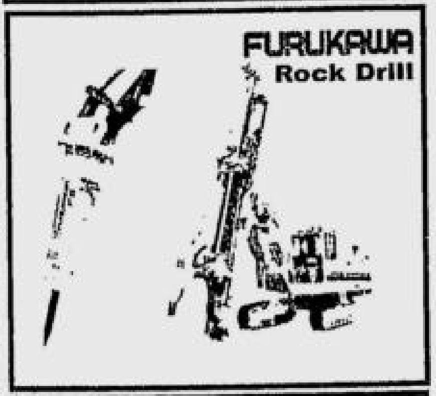


BOMAG Heavy Equipment

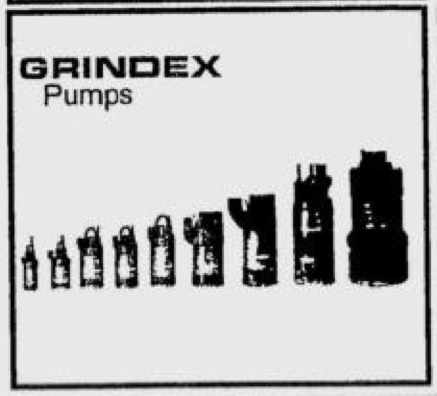
IVECO Trucks & Buses



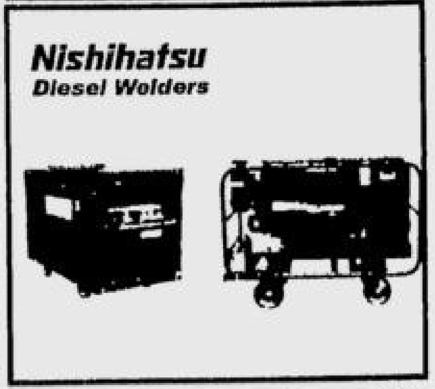
FURUKAWA Rock Drill



GRINDEX Pumps



Nishihatsu Diesel Welders



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	ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4	GB3 GREENBELT 3	ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
1	THX HITCH	SON OF THE MASK	CONSTANTINE	GUARANTEED SEATS THX MILLION DOLLAR BABY 2:45, 5:35, 8:25, 11:15	FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2	MILLION DOLLAR BABY	HITCH	LEMONY SNICKET'S	GUARANTEED SEATS THX HITCH 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20	ALFIE
3	CONSTANTINE	CONSTANTINE	GUARANTEED SEATS THX MILLION DOLLAR BABY 2:00, 4:50, 7:40, 10:30	GUARANTEED SEATS LEMONY SNICKET'S 2:10, 4:30, 6:50, 9:10, 11:30	CONSTANTINE
4	LEMONY SNICKET'S	MILLION DOLLAR BABY	BUNSHINBA	GUARANTEED SEATS CONSTANTINE 1:50, 4:15, 6:40, 9:15, 11:30	SON OF THE MASK
5	THE AVIATOR		SON OF THE MASK	GUARANTEED SEATS THE AVIATOR 1:45, 5:00, 8:15, 11:30	
6			HITCH		
7			THE AVIATOR		

GB1
GREENBELT 1

	GB1
1	MILLION DOLLAR BABY 12:30, 3:20, 6:10, 9:00
2	HITCH 12:20, 2:45, 5:10, 7:35, 10:00

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
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(FOR MARCH 9)

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Greenbelt 3 - 12:50 pm, 3:30, 6:10, 8:50, 11:30

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Starting March 9 reserve your seats by texting SURESEATS GB3 or SURESEATS G4 to 2333 (Globe) or 211 (Smart). Or log on to www.sureseats.com for web reservation.

MTRCB Rating: Parental Guidance 13 (PG-13)

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GALLERIA 632-9115/16

1 CONSTANTINE • THX
11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00
2 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00
3 SON OF THE MASK 2
10:45 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00
4 BUNSHINSABA
11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
5 HITCH
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
6 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
10:20 1:15 4:10 7:05 10:00
7 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
12:40 3:40 6:40 9:40
8 INFECTION
12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50
9 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
10 MEET THE FOCKERS
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 HITCH
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
2 SON OF THE MASK 2
10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45
3 CONSTANTINE
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
4 INFECTION
10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45
5 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
6 BUNSHINSABA
10:30 12:25 2:20 4:15 6:10 8:05 10:00
7 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
10:50 1:35 4:20 7:05 9:50

METRO EAST 682 8193 • 682-8199

1 INFECTION
10:50 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50
2 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
11:20 1:40 4:00 6:20 9:00
3 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
11:20 1:40 4:00 6:20 9:00
4 SON OF THE MASK 2
12:20 2:40 5:00 7:20 9:30
5 MILLION DOLLAR BABY
10:25 1:25 4:25 7:25 10:30
6 HITCH
11:50 2:30 5:10 7:50 10:30
7 CONSTANTINE
10:35 1:05 3:35 6:05 8:20 10:30
8 BUNSHINSABA *(OUIJA BOARD)*
10:50 12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 8:50 10:30

NOVALICHES 935-3229/31

1 CONSTANTINE
11:50 2:40 5:30 8:25
2 HITCH
11:00 1:30 4:00 6:30 8:55
3 FOOTSTEPS
11:00 1:00 3:00 5:00 7:00 8:55
4 SON OF THE MASK 2
11:00 1:20 3:40 6:00 8:25
5 RAY
11:00 1:30 4:00 6:30 8:55
6 SIDEWAYS
11:00 1:30 4:00 6:30 8:55
7 RESERVE
8 RESERVE

PIONEER 687-5378

1 HITCH
2 CONSTANTINE
3 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
4 MILLION DOLLAR BABY

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2575

1 SHALL WE DANCE
2 CONSTANTINE
3 INFECTION
4 NIGHT JOB

CAINTA 240-4661

1 HITCH
2 SIDEWAYS
3 SON OF THE MASK 2
4 CONSTANTINE

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1 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
2 RACING STRIPES
3 CONSTANTINE
4 HELLWOLF
5 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13

DASMARIÑAS [illegible]

1 HITCH
2 NIGHT JOB
3 CONSTANTINE
4 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
5 RACING STRIPES

ANGELES (045) 892-2348

1 HITCH
2 INFECTION
3 CONSTANTINE
4 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS

IMUS [illegible]

1 HITCH
2 SON OF THE MASK 2
3 SAKSI...DRIVER
4 CONSTANTINE
5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
6 HELLWOLF

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 [illegible]

1 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
2 SAKSI...DRIVER
3 INFECTION
4 PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
5 HITCH
6 CONSTANTINE

BACOLOD [illegible]

1 CONSTANTINE
2 MEET THE FOCKERS
3 ASSAULT ON PRECINT 13
4 SIDEWAYS
5 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
6 SHALL WE DANCE

ILOILO (033) 336-9070

1 FLIGHT OF THE PHOENIX
2 A SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
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5 LET THE LOVE BEGIN
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Vintage Torre tops Tanauan tilt

Final standings: 8.0 points—E. Torre (P100,000), R. Dableo (P40,000); 7.0—D. Laylo (P20,000), R. Llavanes (P10,000), C. Garma (P5,000), R. Nolte (P2,000), M. Rebano (P2,000); 6.5—O. Dimakiling (P2,000), J. Gonzales (P2,000); 6.0—J.P. Gomez (P2,000), E. Montoya (P1,000), M. Roque (P1,000), P. Roca (P1,000), F. Donguines (P1,000), R. Suelo Jr. (P1,000), R. Segarra (P1,000), J. Mayor (P1,000), W. So (P1,000), W. Retanal Jr. (P1,000), C. Vizco Jr (P1,000)

By Marlon Bernardino, *Contributor*

TORRE

TANAUAN CITY—Tournament favorite Grandmaster Eugene outplayed International Master Barlo Nadera in the eighth round and then halved the point with National Master Ronald Llavanes in the final round Saturday to bag the first Tanauan Chess Open-Mayor's Cup at the Speaker Jose Laurel Memorial Gymnasium here.

Torre finished the P200,000 tournament unscathed with 8.0 points on seven wins and two draws. Asia's first GM actually wound up in a tie with Asian Zonal champion IM Ronald Dableo but copped the title via the winner-over-the-other rule.

Dableo, a member of the Philippine Air Foce team like Nadera and Llavanes, trounced Edsel Montoya of Rizal Technological University in 31 moves of an English Opening to catch Torre on top at the end of the nine-round event.

Torre won the lion's purse of P100,000 plus the elegant cup staked by the Tanauan City government headed by Mayor Fred Corona, the First Asia Institute and the Active Chess Center of Asia Inc.

Dableo, who won all his matches except the one against the 53-year-old Torre in the fifth round, pocketed P40,000.

Cash prizes were not pooled, as is the custom in tournaments where players tied in the final standings, said Gene Poliarco, the tournament's chief arbiter.

"When I learned that the tiebreak would be winner-over-the-other, I said a draw with Llavanes was enough," said Torre, whose five straight wins in the first part of the tournament was halted in a draw by NM Darwin Laylo in the sixth round. He went on to beat seventh seed NM Rolando Nolte in the next round.

Five players—Laylo, Llavanes, IM Chito Garma, Nolte and Tacloban's NM Mario Rebano—pooled 7.0 points each, but the Armyman Laylo took third place and P20,000 due to a higher quotient.

In other featured final round matches, Laylo subdued five-time RP executive champion Jenny Mayor, Garma outsmarted 11-year-old Fide Master Wesley So, Nolte ambushed NM John Paul Gomez and Rebano downed Palawan Open champion Nadera.

The category winners were Alfie Divinigracia (1600-unrated section), Virgilio Samson (1800), Rodrigo Alejandre (2000), Jan Emmanuel Garcia (kiddies) and Olympian WNM Loreshyl Cuizon (ladies).

Miko Fatman derby gets going at Pasay cockpit

THOUSANDS of cockfight enthusiasts converge today at the Pasay City Cockpit as the elimination rounds of the Miko Fatman 6-Cock Derby get going at 6 p.m. with Sagupaan Complexor 3000, Sagupaan B-50 Forten and Sagupaan Mite Free as sponsors. Derby host is veteran cocker-sportsman Pepito Ngo of Rizal, who conceptualized this three-day cockfest last year. At stake is a guaranteed prize of P1.2 million, with an entry fee of P18.700. Each participant will also get a Kebao DVD player and a 10-liter water jug, while the champion and his handler-gaffer will get DVD players. Participants competing in Wednesday's second round must submit entries tomorrow, from 2 p.m. to 9 p.m. For inquiries, call the PCC office at 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750. The qualifiers battle it out for the championship on Friday.

NEW TOAST—Amaya Paz, 19-year-old UP psychology scholar who won four gold medals in the compound division of the recent 1st Asian Archery Grand Prix in Bangkok, Thailand, takes careful aim before firing in the individual Olympic Round finals, where she beat Philippine teammate Jennifer Chan. With her impressive showing, Paz emerged as the country's top women's compound archer.

Sound Offer not a good tender for West Bound

By Edwin Villanueva, *Contributor*

ELDY Salvador may have lost the ride on West Bound but he's thankful he landed one on Australian import Sound Offer.

"*Parang* (It's like) blessing in disguise. *Mabuti rin namang kabayo ang nasakyan ko* (My mount is also a good horse)," said Salvador moments after powering Sound Offer to an upset win over heavy favorite West Bound in the second leg of the Santa Ana Park Championship Series yesterday.

Sound Offer, a five-year-old daughter of 1995 Kentucky Derby winner Thunder Gulch, ran in complete contrast to her seventh and last performance in the opening leg of the event as she took the lead from the outset and never looked back.

West Bound rallied from fourth to tackle Sound Offer down the stretch but the latter simply outclassed Jonathan Hernandez's mount to prevail by two lengths.

Salvador keyed West Bound's stirring victory in last year's Classic Open but was replaced for yesterday's outing by Hernandez after piloting the son of Heza Gone West to third place in the first leg of the Santa Ana racefest and to second place in the Philracom Open.

Sound Offer, who drew only P77,745 in sales out of P1,379,841, got the P300,000 first prize for the Javier-Ferrer Stable after nailing down her sixth win in 10 runs.

West Bound, the outstanding pick with sales of P895,281, settled for P90,000.

Second choice Flying Princess finished third, six lengths off the winner, and got P50,000, while Ruah arrived fourth and last.

Sound Offer's wire-to-wire romp earned her a fast 1:34-flat clocking on splits of 18.5-24-24-27.5.

Ruah, under Val Dilema, pressured Sound Offer in the early going but tired badly nearing the far turn.

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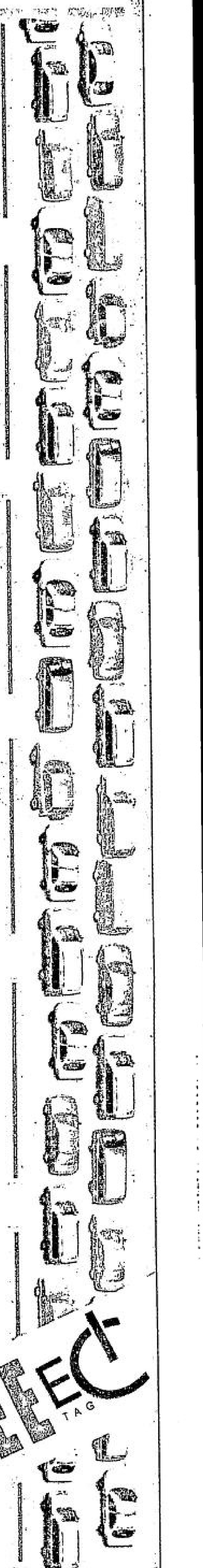

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In this village, dreams are being fulfilled

By Joel V. Nigos

VICENTE Garduce or Mang Uloy to neighbors is the proverbial family man in a depressed community who's always summoning heaven and earth just to make both ends meet.

Buying junks using his kariton then reselling them to shops to gain profits as source of livelihood, his family barely makes it through a day. With nine kids, he and his wife Aurea then decided to venture into a garment business so they can send them to school.

His desire to build his own house prompted him to collect Styrofoam. He later used them as materials making his "dream house" a reality. Since then, his visitors, friends and relatives alike, would call their home white house.

Despite having his own "dream house," Mang Uloy's family was not exempted from the forces of nature.

"Tumutulo yung bubong namin kapag umuulan. Kaya kaming mag-anak natutulog kaming nakaupo. Nagsisiksikan kami sa parte ng bahay na walang tulo," said Mang Uloy.

But Mang Uloy's family will no longer go back to this old order of things. They will no longer look at the sky before the night falls so they can prepare their sleep positions before they buzz off.

Mang Uloy is one of the beneficiaries of the Gawad Kalinga community called McDonald's village now being built in Rizal.

The building of the McDonald's village is a joint project between Ronald McDonald's House Charities, the charity arm of McDonald's, with Gawad Kalinga, Kids for Christ and DSWD. The vision is to build 100 homes for the families in the depressed area so that the children in the community will have a better future. McDonald's has already built 43 homes to date.

At the turnover rites on site, Kenneth S. Yang, RMHC president, turned over a check worth P1 million for the construction of 20 more homes for Hapay na Mangga residents.

"RMHC is convinced that if a nationwide micro-fund raising campaign is supported with campaign materials, government endorsement, as well as business, academe and media support, Gawad Kalinga will be able to build homes faster for the victims," Yang said.

Launched also during the program was the canisters which kicks-off the campaign of RMHC to raise another P12 million for a Children's Village in San Isidro, Nueva Ecija. When filled up, these canisters may be brought to any McDonald's outlet nationwide. RMHC will turnover the canisters to Gawad Kalinga.

'Bahay Bulilit'

Also during the turnover rites at McDonald's village was the inauguration of the Bahay Bulilit Day Care Center intended for the children of Hapay na Mangga.

Bahay Bulilit is the 6th day care center that has been established with the help of RMHC and is the first in a Gawad Kalinga site. Other centers are located in Makati, Quezon City, Mandaluyong, Manila and Pasay.

Chit Leonardo, program manager of Sibol, says that the center offers pre-school and day-care services for kids in the community ages three to five. This, she says, would enable mothers to work to augment their family's income.

"'Bahay Bulilit' aims to promote values formation among the kids. Aside from that, we also teach them proper hygiene, to give respect, how to pray, etc. We also want them to develop a mindset urging them to have dreams in life and to reach out for these goals. Proper parenting is also being taught to the parents," she said.

The center which now has 20 pupils is a partnership between RMHC and DSWD. The government agency builds day-care centers in depressed areas to give primary education to children under six years old. At Bahay Bulilit, DSWD supervises the educational component while McDonald's puts in the cost of building the center. The local government, meanwhile, contributes in terms of land while the community oversees its day-to-day operation. Mayor George Ricardo Gacula and Mang Uloy, who is also the president of Samahang Magkakapitbahayan, received the Bahay Bulilit Center from Yang.

PHOTOS BY RUDY ESPERAS

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TV GUIDE

Monday, March 7, 2005

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ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Showbiz No. 1 (4:25 PM)	Gatekeepers (5:10 PM)	Gundam Seed (5:35 PM)	The Road To Stardom	TV Patrol		Spirits	Krystala	Hiram	Save The Last Dance	Til Death Do Us Part	OK Fine! Whatever			Insider
NBN	Value Vision				Teledyaryo	Value Vision	Next Stop			Network Forum		Teledyaryo		The Working President	Concert at the Park			Dial M	
ABC 5			Problema Nyo, Sagot Ko	Art Is-Kool	Anime Ring Kasho		Anime Ring Kasho		Sentro	Friends	The Apprentice				Big News	Pops!		Extreme Island	Billboard On-Air
GMA 7		Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Joyride	Glass Shoes	One Piece	Knock Out	Slam Dunk	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Mulawin		Starstruck	Stairway To Heaven	Lagot Ka, Isusumbong Kita			Saksi
RPN 9	Metro TV Shopping			Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberries	Sponge Bob	Entertainment Tonight	Wrestling		NBA On RPN					Newswatch Now	Sex & the City		
IBC 13		Lifestyle		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Lifestyle		Home Shopping Network		Mosconi Cup					IBC News Tonite	Linawin Natin	
Solar		Wow		Slamball		Restol	Zeta Project	Mucha Lucha!	Spiderman	Stargate SG1									
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Cinema One		Ping Lacson Story				Drama Studio: Calvento Files The Movie				Mano-Mano 3				Cine Tonight: Antipolo Massacre (Premiere)				Antonia Part 2	
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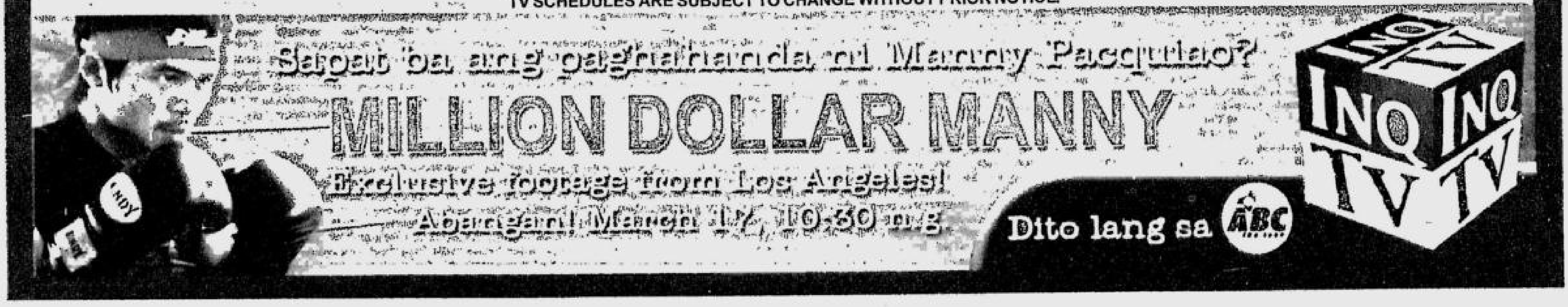
Star World	Weird TV	The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Ally McBeal		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	That 70s Show	Everybody Loves Raymond	Grounded For Life	Frasier	The Casino		Friends	That 70s Show
CNN				Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News Asia		World News		World News Asia		World News	World Sport
National Geographic		Built For The Kill		Totally Wild	Wildlife Diary	Be The Creature		The Snake Wranglers	Croc Chronicles Dr. Brady Barr	Nature's War Zone		About Asia		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Built For The Kill		Totally Wild	Wildlife Diary
Solar Sports		In This Corner		RP-Taiwan 9 Ball Chal. Lining vs. Yang				GWS ep.5-2005	GWS ep.6-2005	Sagupaan		NBA Jam Local	NBA TV Daily	NBA Game: Utah @ San Antonio					NBA Inside Stuff
Lifestyle Network	Country Style	Interiors By Design	Decorating With Style	Decorating Cents	Molto Mario	Sweet Dreams	30 Minute Meals	Bill Boggs Corner	Unwrapped	Food 911									
HBO			I Love You To Death (3:45 PM)				Freedom Fighter (5:20 PM)			Twister (7:10 PM)				City Slickers: The Legend Of Curly's Gold				Tears Of The Sun (10:55PM)	
Star Movies		Poltergeist II: The Other Side			Opening Night (4:45 PM)	Preacher's Wife (5:15 PM)					Dick (7:25 PM)			Arachnophobia				Random Hearts (10:55PM)	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	Baby Looney Tunes	Sylvester & Tweety Mysteries	Police Academy	He-Man & The Masters Of The Universe	Static Shock	Yu-Gi-Oh!	Shaman King	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Codename: Kids Next Door	Mr. T	Josie And The Pussycats	Boomerang: The Superfriends	Yu-Gi-Oh!
ESPN		Big East Conf.: Syracuse vs Boston College				Spanish Football League 2004/05				Eng. Premier League Highlights 04/05		Sportscenter Asia	UEFA Champs League Magazine Show	2004 Spirotational Table Tennis Championships	Big 12 Conf.: Texas vs Oklahoma St.				Sportscenter Asia
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	The Sleepover Club	Art Attack/Unlatlative Bunny	That's So Raven	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Lilo & Stitch/Unlatlative Bunny				My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	According To Jim	America's Funniest Home Video		
Cinemax			Caught In The Headlights				Meeting Venus				Into Thin Air: Death On Everest			El Diablo				The Scorpion King (10:50PM)	
Hallmark Channel	Mad About You	Jack				Play With Me Sesame	Sesame Street		Bewitched	Judging Amy		Five Days To Midnight		Gracie's Choice			Just Cause (10:35PM)		Judging Amy (11:25PM)
Discovery Channel		American Chopper		Extreme Engineering		Wild Science		Ultimate Discovery		Unsolved History				Wild Discovery		Ultimate Discovery		Civilisations	
MTV Philippines			Hangin Out at MTV		MTV Most Wanted		TRL:Making the Video: J.Lo: Get Right	MTV Dyes		The Assistant	MTV Fashionista	Rich Girls	MTV Hits	Brand New		VH1 Video Collections			
Sports Plus					Acc Basketball North Carolina @ Florida St.					Arena Football: San Jose @ Orlando		Italia Serie A		NFL Delayed Telecast		Ford Ch'ship @ Doral Day4			
EWTN	St. Matthew	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Benediction And Devotion	Story Keepers	Image Of God	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns Of Our Lady Of Angels Monastery	Light Of The East II	Voices On Virtue	EWTN Gallery	Threshold Of Hope Encore		Sunday Night Live With Fr. Groeschel		Daily Mass		Angelus (10:15PM)	G.K. Chesterton	Catholic Compass	

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.


Sapat ba ang paghahanda ni Manny Pacquiao?
MILLION DOLLAR MANNY
Exclusive footage from Los Angeles!
Abangan! March 17, 10:30 n.g.
Dito lang sa ABC
INQ TV

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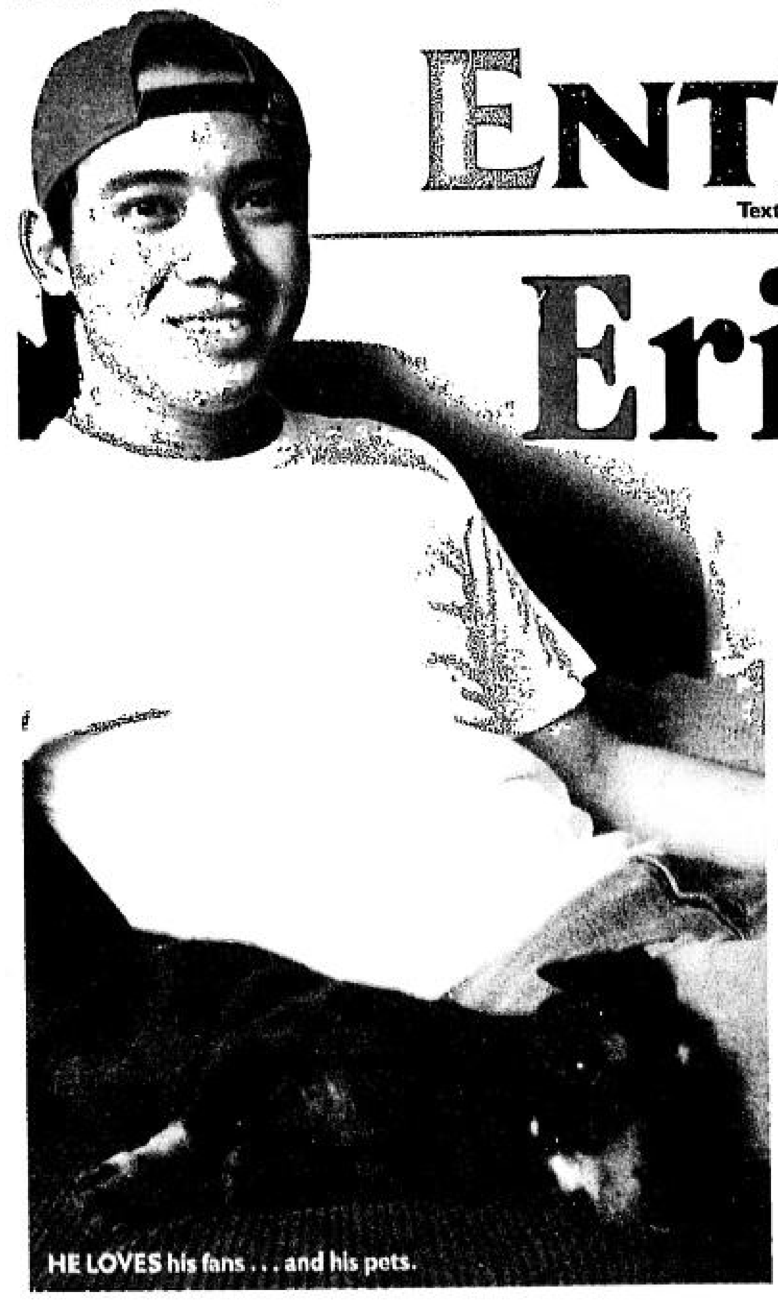
Editor Louie C. Camino
Assistant Editor Emmie G. Velarde
Text us your feedback: inquirer ent name/age/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Erik: Thinking big



HE LOVES his fans . . . and his pets.

By Marinel R. Cruz
Photos by Mitch Mauricio

"STAR in a Million" champ Erik Santos can't wait to transfer his parents and siblings from their often-flooded home in Malabon to a brand-new house in Quezon City.

OUT OF THE CLOSET

"I'm saving up for the new house," Erik told INQUIRER Entertainment in an interview at the two-story Santos residence. "I'm hoping it will be finished by June, before the rains come.

"My bedroom will be the biggest," said the 22-year-old. "It will be as big as our living room here. It will have a terrace, a bathroom and a huge walk-in closet.

"My clothes can no longer fit in my room," he said. "Now, they also occupy the hallway on the second floor, a portion of my sister's closet and the guest room."

Erik said most of his clothes and shoes were gifts from friends and fans. "I'm very grateful," he said. "Last Christmas, I received a jumbo-sized *balikbayan* box full of clothes from my fan base in the States. Not only do they give me clothes, some fans also sent me a portable DVD player, digital camera, video camera, really expensive perfumes and caps. *Lahat ba ng artista ganito?"*

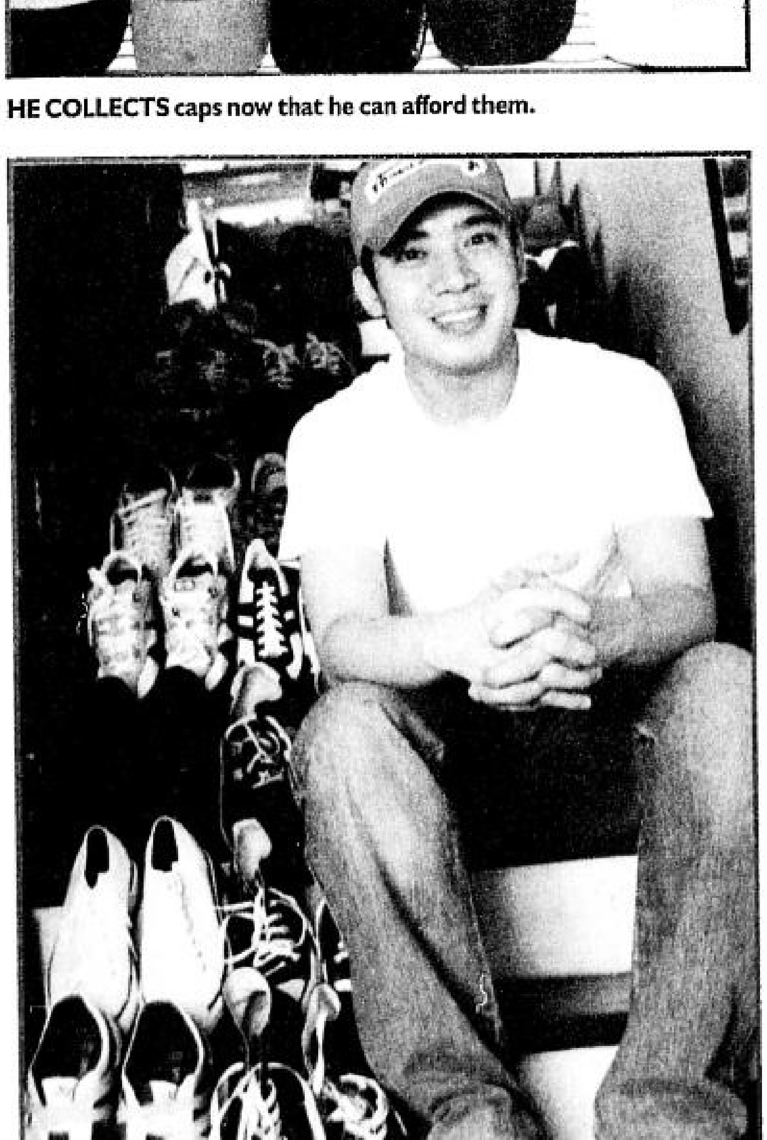
SHOES. "This black Skechers pair is special. I wore them for the 'Prince of Pop' concert with Ai-Ai. I wear them everyday. They go with anything.

"I work out in them. They're really comfy. The rubber soles are guaranteed no-slip.

"For more formal occasions, I wear these black leather shoes that I bought in Macau. I went there after I won 'Star in A Million.' They're very sturdy. I wear them in almost all of my corpo-

ERIK/ A2-4

HE COLLECTS caps now that he can afford them.



BOY, are they spilling out of his room or what?

Weigh Less Center
MENDEZ MEDICAL GROUP
Body & Face
'IT'S TIME TO PAMPER YOURSELF!
BRING OUT THE NEW YOU!
Stand out and Shine...
Avail of any 2 of the Rosy Peel & Diamond Peel for the price of one.
Weigh Less Center Branches:
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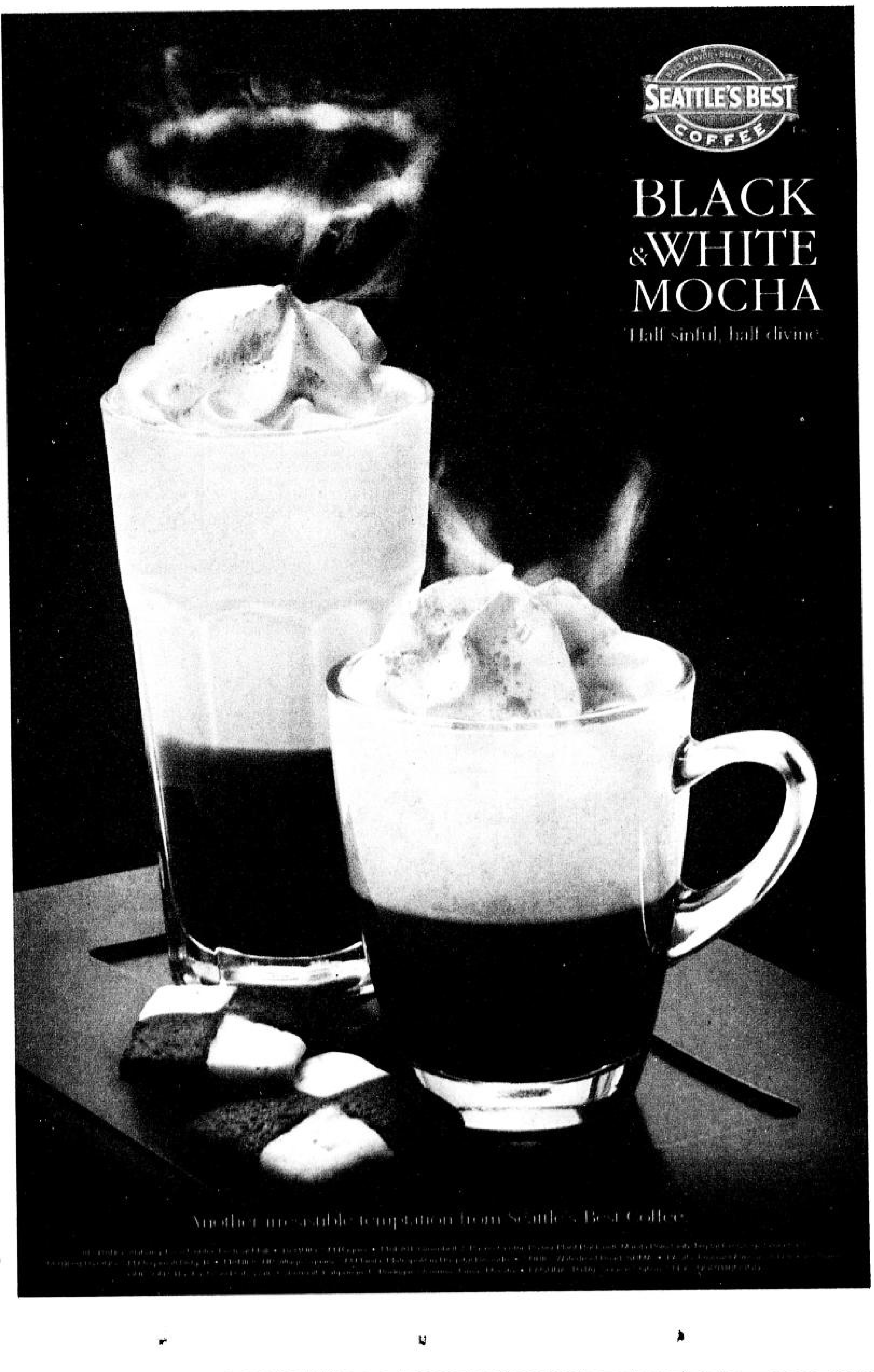
NEPO MALL, Angeles City • MEGA CTR., Cabanatuan City • CITY GARDEN HOTEL
ARANETA SQUARE, Caloocan • STARMALL, Shaw Blvd.
Website: www.weighlesscenter.net / E-mail: weighlesscenter@yahoo.com

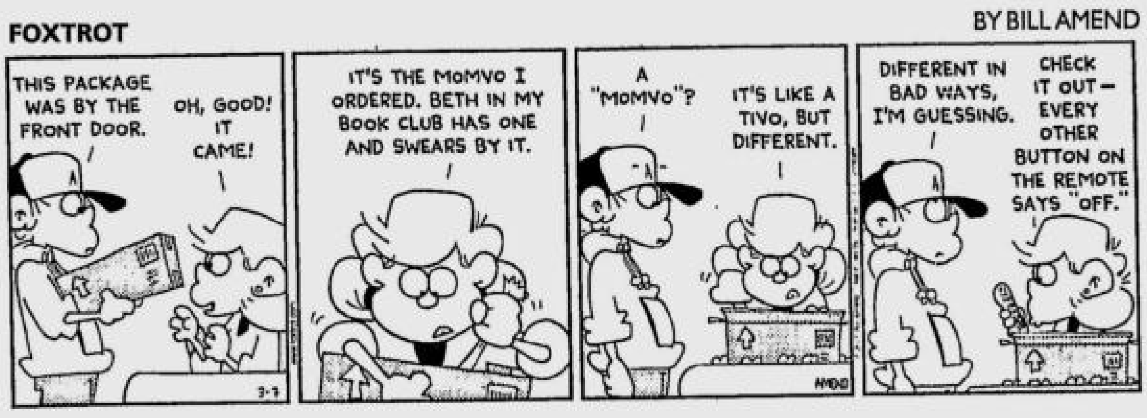
SKIN REVIVING FACIAL MASKS
COLLAGEN MASK
Moisturizes and support your skin own cell renewal. Increase elasticity and moisture-binding capacity of the skin.
CAVIAR COLLAGEN MASK
An anti-ageing treatment with the combined elements of collagen and caviar complex. Caviar's natural peptides stimulates and activates cell metabolism to promote the repair process of tired and stained skin.
VITAMIN C MASK
Supplies the skin new energy and stimulates its function increasing cell activities reinforcing and motivating the production of collagen. Protecting the skin from UV ray free radicals and slow down skin ageing
LYCOPENE MASK
Is an antioxidant mask which ingredients came from unique plant extracts rich in Vitamins and minerals to help our skin combat damaging pollutants for a younger more healthier skin.
WHITENING TEA MASK
Prevents tyrosine and melanin formation of the skin which will result to skin discoloration and pigmentation. Its antioxidant content reduces signs of age acceleration
PIMPLE ACNE MASK
Helps treat and prevent pimples and acne problems. It will work to make pores smaller and recover health and elasticity to hair follicles for a more healthy and delicate looking skin.
LET'S FACE IT
THE ONE STOP FACIAL SALON
BRANCHES:
[illegible]
SOON TO OPEN: CITY MALL, OLONGAPO / ROBINSONS PIONEER, MANDALUYONG



SEATTLE'S BEST COFFEE
BLACK & WHITE MOCHA
Half sinful, half divine.
Another irresistible temptation from Seattle's Best Coffee.
[illegible]

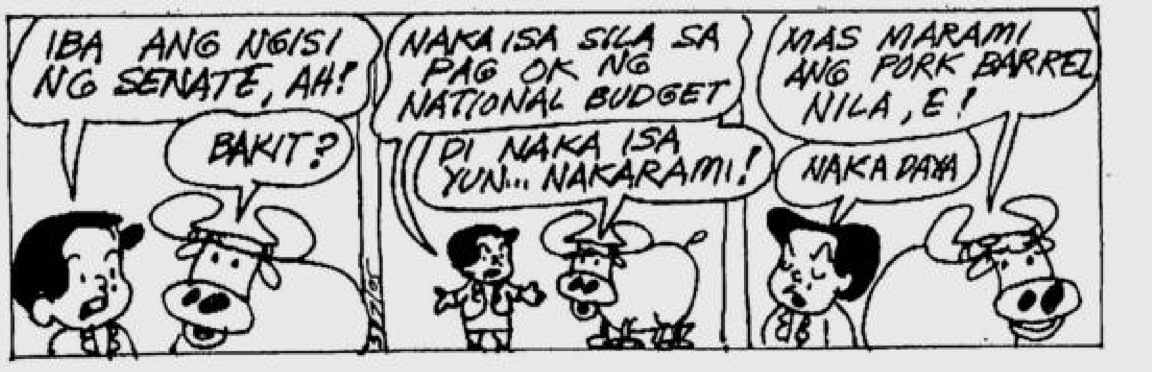
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


THIS PACKAGE WAS BY THE FRONT DOOR.
OH, GOOD! IT CAME!
IT'S THE MOMVO I ORDERED. BETH IN MY BOOK CLUB HAS ONE AND SWEARS BY IT.
A "MOMVO"?
IT'S LIKE A TIVO, BUT DIFFERENT.
DIFFERENT IN BAD WAYS, I'M GUESSING.
CHECK IT OUT — EVERY OTHER BUTTON ON THE REMOTE SAYS "OFF."
3-7

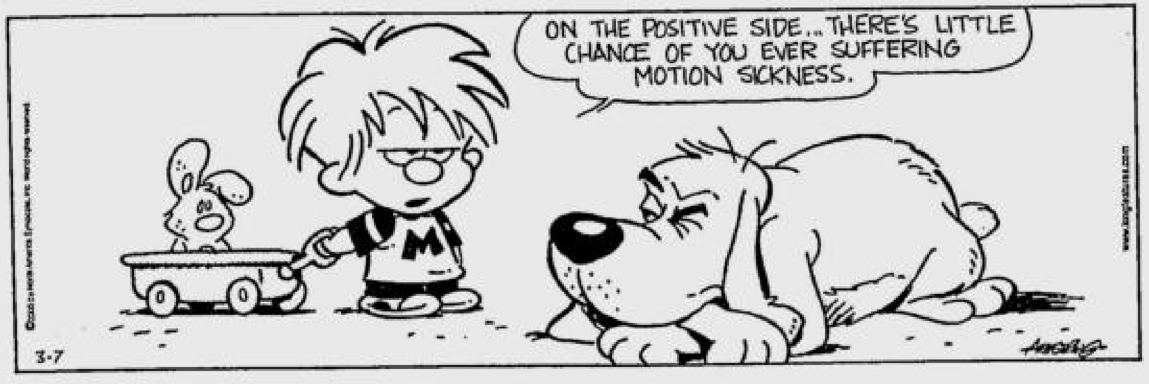
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


IBA ANG NGISI NG SENATE, AH!
BAKIT?
NAKA ISA SILA SA PAG OK NG NATIONAL BUDGET
DI NAKA ISA YUN... NAKARAMI!
MAS MARAMI ANG PORK BARREL NILA, E!
NAKA DAYA

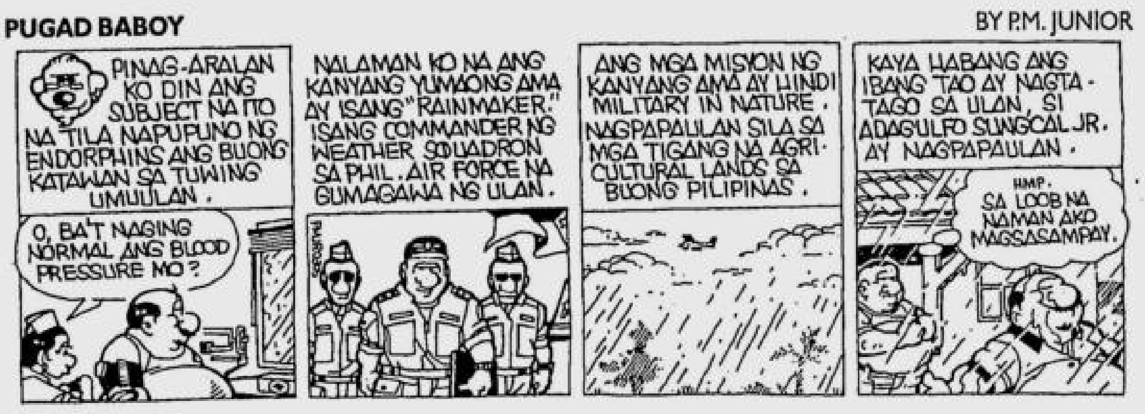
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


ON THE POSITIVE SIDE... THERE'S LITTLE CHANCE OF YOU EVER SUFFERING MOTION SICKNESS.
M
3-7

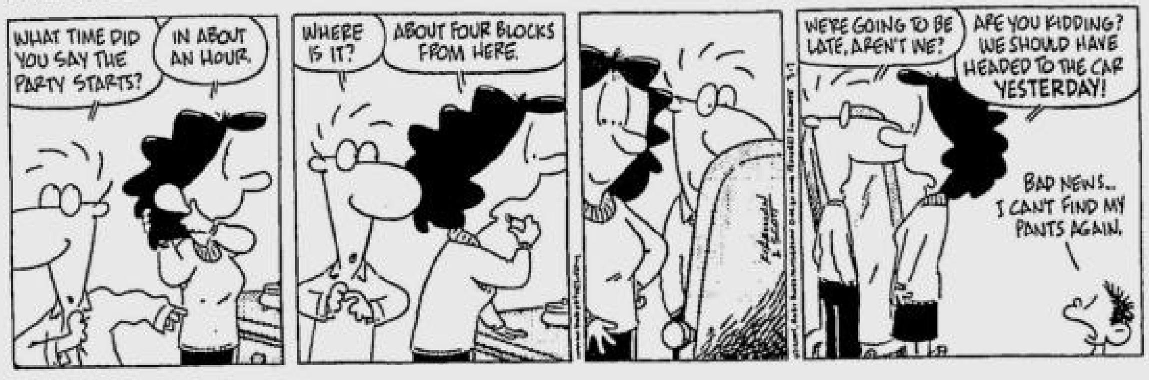
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


PINAG-ARALAN KO DIN ANG SUBJECT NA ITO NA TILA NAPUPUNO NG ENDORPHINS ANG BUONG KATAWAN SA TUWING UMUULAN.
O, BA'T NAGING NORMAL ANG BLOOD PRESSURE MO?
NALAMAN KO NA ANG KANYANG YUMAONG AMA AY ISANG "RAINMAKER." ISANG COMMANDER NG WEATHER SQUADRON SA PHIL. AIR FORCE NA GUMAGAWA NG ULAN.
ANG MGA MISYON NG KANYANG AMA AY HINDI MILITARY IN NATURE. NAGPAPAULAN SILA SA MGA TIGANG NA AGRI-CULTURAL LANDS SA BUONG PILIPINAS.
KAYA HABANG ANG IBANG TAO AY NAGTA-TAGO SA ULAN, SI ADAGULFO SUNGCAL JR. AY NAGPAPAULAN.
HMP. SA LOOB NA NAMAN AKO MAGSASAMPAY.

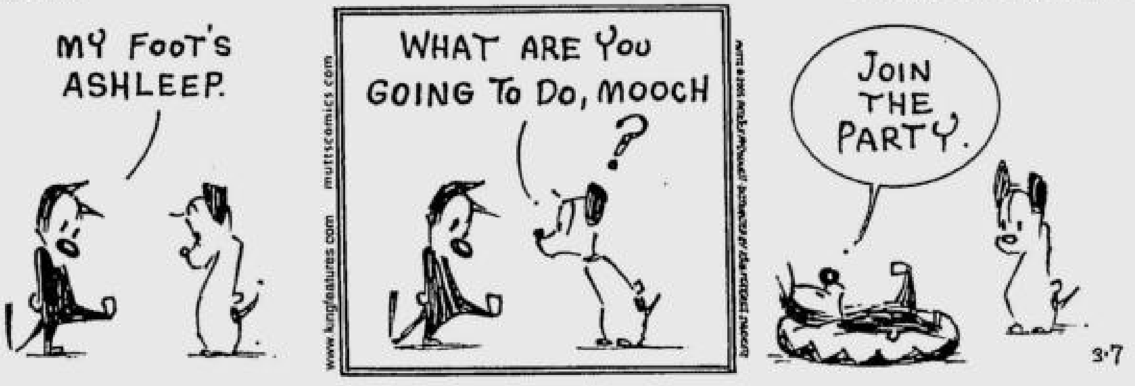
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


WHAT TIME DID YOU SAY THE PARTY STARTS?
IN ABOUT AN HOUR.
WHERE IS IT?
ABOUT FOUR BLOCKS FROM HERE.
WE'RE GOING TO BE LATE, AREN'T WE?
ARE YOU KIDDING? WE SHOULD HAVE HEADED TO THE CAR YESTERDAY!
BAD NEWS... I CAN'T FIND MY PANTS AGAIN.

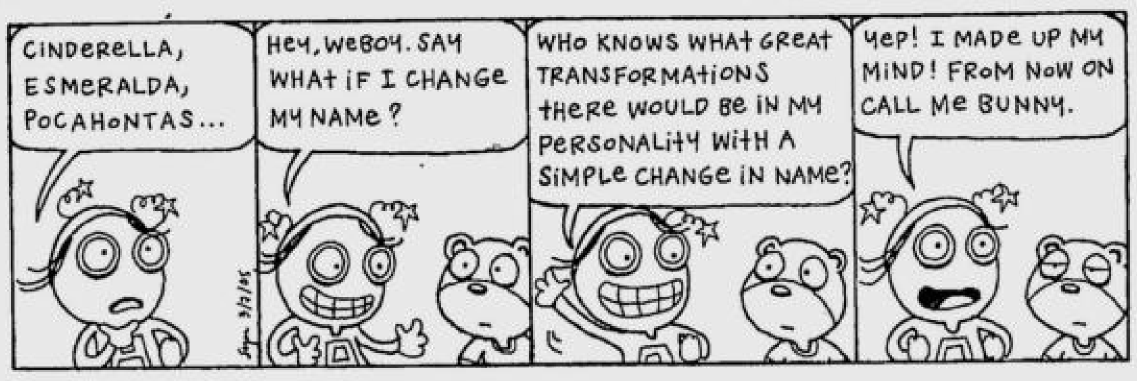
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MY FOOT'S ASHLEEP.
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, MOOCH
?
JOIN THE PARTY.
www.kingfeatures.com
muttscomics.com
3·7

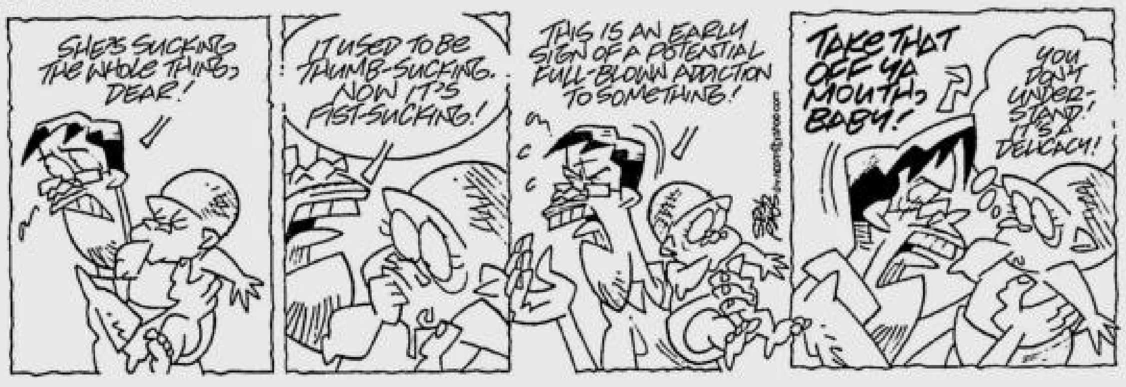
ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


CINDERELLA, ESMERALDA, POCAHONTAS...
HEY, WEBOY. SAY WHAT IF I CHANGE MY NAME?
WHO KNOWS WHAT GREAT TRANSFORMATIONS THERE WOULD BE IN MY PERSONALITY WITH A SIMPLE CHANGE IN NAME?
YEP! I MADE UP MY MIND! FROM NOW ON CALL ME BUNNY.

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


SHE'S SUCKING THE WHOLE THING, DEAR!
IT USED TO BE THUMB-SUCKING. NOW IT'S FIST-SUCKING!
THIS IS AN EARLY SIGN OF A POTENTIAL FULL-BLOWN ADDICTION TO SOMETHING!
TAKE THAT OFF YA MOUTH, BABY!
YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND! IT'S A DELICACY!

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're sensitive, caring and giving. You look for practical outlets for your feelings. Helping others in a very real way is a reward for you. You're a fast learner. You're also extremely private and independent. The year ahead might be one of the best years of your life. Opportunities await you. Go forth and open doors!
Birthdate of: George Perec, author; Ivan Lendl, tennis player; Daniel J. Travanti, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Do not argue or disagree with your boss today. Ditto for discussions with parents, teachers and authority figures. This is the worst day for disagreements with authority figures. (Run in the other direction!)

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Travel plans and dealings with publishing are definitely blocked today. Be patient. Don't try to push the river. Wait a day or two to make your pitch about what you want.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Financial arguments or disputes about shared possessions, especially inheritances, are highly likely now. Try to sit this one out. Disagreements will be nasty.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is a very harsh day for relationships. Conversations with partners and close friends are challenging! Be patient, because that is the only way to survive today.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Do not be quick to judge co-workers too harshly today. Likewise, do not take criticism from others. Avoid disagreements.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): Be patient with children today, and be vigilant about their safety. Similarly, take extra precautions with professional sports. Do not force anything or any situation.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Domestic arguments are extremely likely to happen today. Anger serves no purpose other than to make everyone miserable. Any effort to accomplish things at home seems to be blocked today. Go gently.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You feel others are saying things to anger you today. This is not the case. It's just easy to get angry with others today, especially siblings. Therefore, don't fall into this trap.

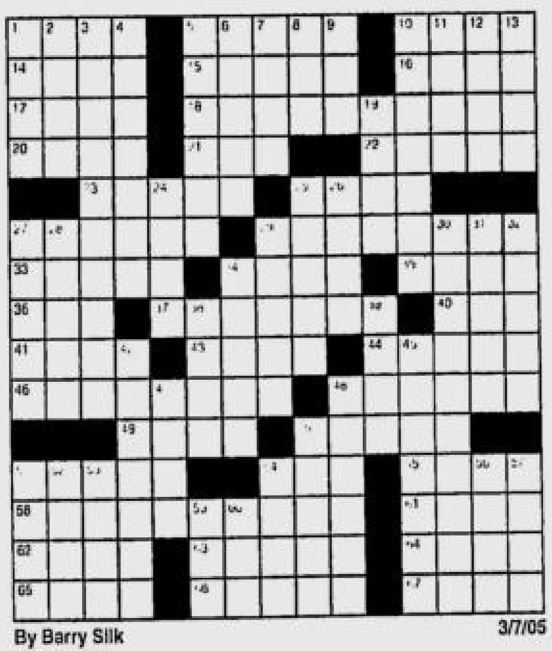
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Try to be calm and patient when dealing with financial matters today. You feel aggressive and easily upset about money and your possessions. But what does this prove?

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Don't be overly aggressive when dealing with others today. You're coming on very strong. Perhaps it's because you feel defensive and upset about something. Stay calm.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You might feel somebody says something today that hits you right in your most vulnerable area. (It could be your worst fear.) Don't strike back. All this will be history in a few days.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Avoid arguments with friends and groups today. They will arise. People are looking for a fight today. You need this like a fish needs a bicycle.

DAILY CROSSWORD


3/7/05

By Barry Silk
McLean, VA

ACROSS
1 $ dispensers
5 Early computer language
10 Fashion
14 Gravy server
15 Oranjestad's country
16 Cain's brother
17 Singer James
18 Conjuration
20 Offshoot group
21 Overhead RRs
22 Chorus voices
23 Flings
25 "Finding __"
27 Preferences
29 Cinch
33 __ out (declined)
34 Dashed
35 Falco of "The Sopranos"
36 Singer DiFranco
37 Mike or Helmut
40 Undivided
41 Parts of a min.
43 Goes in a hurry
44 Tower of __
46 Participate
48 Those who make a bundle?
49 Cooking fat
50 Gulf of Mex. neighbor
51 "U Don't Have to Call" singer
54 Half the UAR
55 Composer Khachaturian
58 Cinematic weeper
61 California valley
62 Pre-Easter period
63 Three on a par five
64 MBA course
65 Throws in
66 Divided into sectors
67 Vaudeville bit

DOWN
1 Vigoda and Lincoln
2 Lug along
3 Sulphur-tipped splinter
4 Legislative act
5 Bactrian and dromedary
6 Face-to-face exams
7 Insects
8 Kimono sash
9 Fond du __, WI
10 Chandler's private eye
11 Final notice?
12 Art __
13 Wapitis
19 Bring to heel
24 Scarlet and crimson
25 Nostril
26 __ out a living (scraped by)
27 L'chaim, e.g.
28 Sleep disorder
29 Celestial transient
30 Homemade building block
31 Vacation boat
32 Hull stabilizers
34 "The __ Man"
38 Burn slightly
39 Skier's lift
42 Picks out
45 Cover names
47 City oasis
48 Spoke sharply
50 Periodical sequence
51 Bruins' sch.
52 Tool building
53 Posterior
54 Talk with one's hands
56 Mine in Marseilles
57 Money factory
59 Tassled hat
60 Thai Buddhist

Saturday's Puzzle Solved

O	P	P	O	S	I	T	E	S	■	M	A	S	T	S
C	A	R	B	U	R	I	Z	E	■	I	N	T	R	O
C	L	E	O	P	A	T	R	A	■	S	T	R	A	W
L	I	T	E	■	■	L	A	S	■	D	E	I	C	E
U	S	E	■	B	E	E	S	■	S	E	A	V	E	R
D	A	N	■	O	A	R	■	B	O	A	T	E	R	S
E	D	S	■	P	R	O	B	A	B	L	E	■	■	■
D	E	E	S	■	■	L	I	T	■	■	R	E	P	S
■	■	■	L	A	T	E	N	E	S	S	■	S	O	L
A	R	T	E	M	I	S	■	S	H	A	■	C	L	U
S	E	R	E	N	E	■	O	M	E	N	■	A	L	G
S	N	A	K	E	■	M	N	O	■	■	P	L	U	G
E	A	V	E	S	■	A	T	T	E	N	U	A	T	E
S	T	I	N	T	■	G	O	E	S	U	N	D	E	R
S	A	S	S	Y	■	S	P	L	A	T	T	E	R	S

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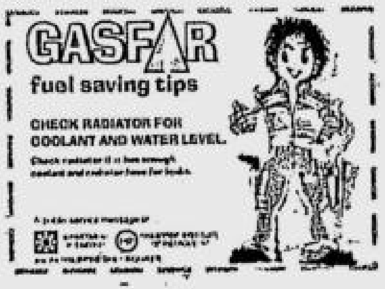
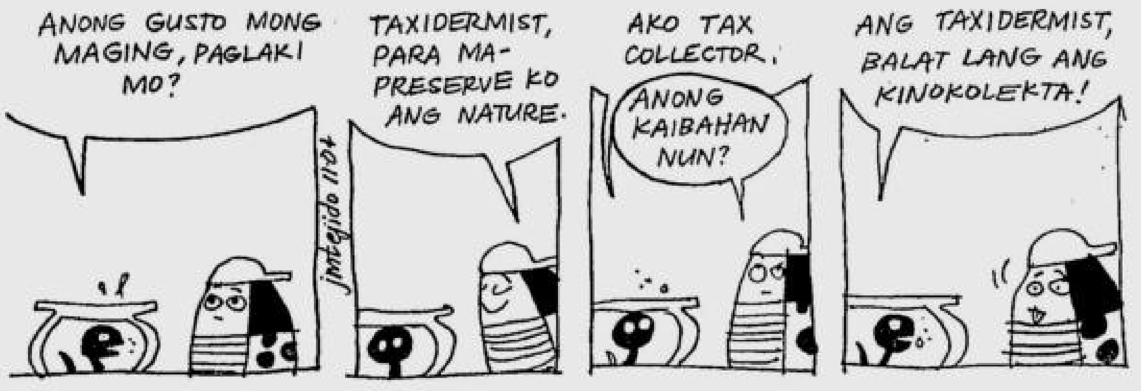

GASFAR
fuel saving tips
CHECK RADIATOR FOR COOLANT AND WATER LEVEL.

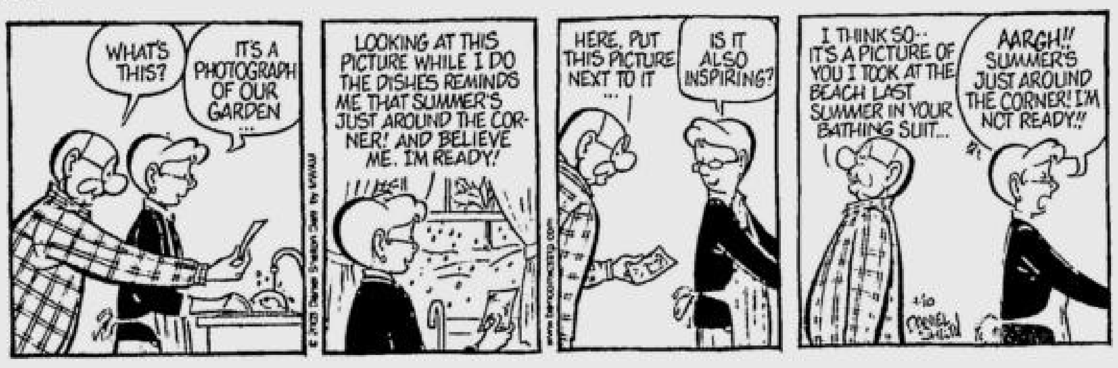
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


ANONG GUSTO MONG MAGING, PAGLAKI MO?
TAXIDERMIST, PARA MA-PRESERVE KO ANG NATURE.
AKO TAX COLLECTOR.
ANONG KAIBAHAN NUN?
ANG TAXIDERMIST, BALAT LANG ANG KINOKOLEKTA!
jmtejido 11/04

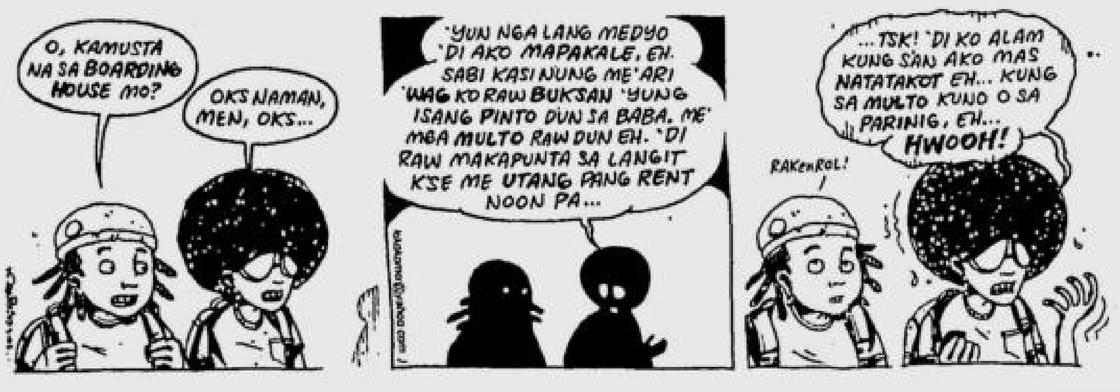
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


WHAT'S THIS?
IT'S A PHOTOGRAPH OF OUR GARDEN ...
LOOKING AT THIS PICTURE WHILE I DO THE DISHES REMINDS ME THAT SUMMER'S JUST AROUND THE CORNER! AND BELIEVE ME. I'M READY!
HERE, PUT THIS PICTURE NEXT TO IT ...
IS IT ALSO INSPIRING?
I THINK SO.. IT'S A PICTURE OF YOU I TOOK AT THE BEACH LAST SUMMER IN YOUR BATHING SUIT...
AARGH!! SUMMER'S JUST AROUND THE CORNER! I'M NOT READY!!

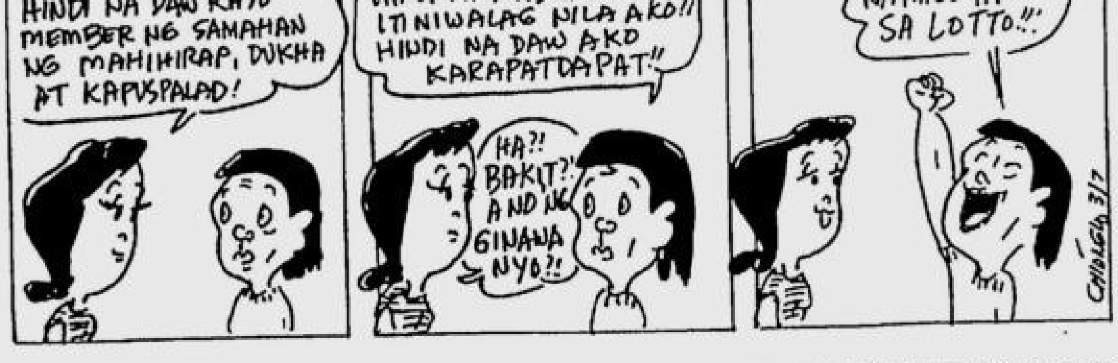
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


O, KAMUSTA NA SA BOARDING HOUSE MO?
OKS NAMAN, MEN, OKS...
'YUN NGA LANG MEDYO 'DI AKO MAPAKALE, EH. SABI KASI NUNG ME'ARI 'WAG KO RAW BUKSAN 'YUNG ISANG PINTO DUN SA BABA. ME' MGA MULTO RAW DUN EH. 'DI RAW MAKAPUNTA SA LANGIT K'SE ME UTANG PANG RENT NOON PA...
RAKENROL!
...TSK! 'DI KO ALAM KUNG SAN AKO MAS NATATAKOT EH... KUNG SA MULTO KUNG O SA PARINIG, EH...
HWOOH!

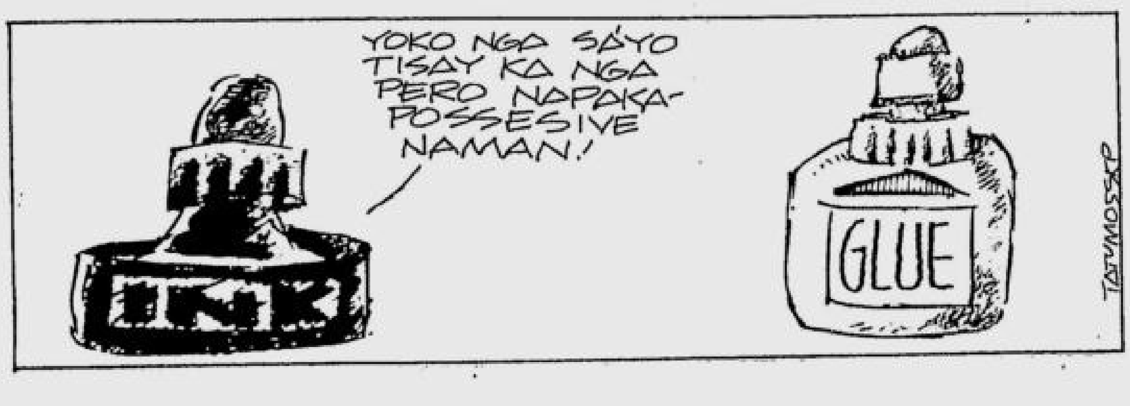
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


HINDI NA DAW KAYO MEMBER NG SAMAHAN NG MAHIHIRAP, DUKHA AT KAPUSPALAD!
HINDI NA MISS JAJA!! ITINIWALAG NILA AKO!! HINDI NA DAW AKO KARAPATDAPAT!!
HA?! BAKIT?! ANO'NG GINAWA NYO?!
NANALO AKO SA LOTTO!!
CHIONGLO 3/7

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


YOKO NGA SÁYO TISAY KA NGA PERO NAPAKA-POSSESIVE NAMAN!
INK
GLUE
TATUMOSSKP

'Idol' finalist Amanda Avila may have Filipino roots

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

WHEN **Sharon Galvez** was eliminated from "American Idol" at the 44-semifinalist level, many viewers here thought that Fil-Ams had lost their only "representative" in the popular star-making talent competition.

Just in the nick of time, however, a colleague shared this discovery: "I surfed the Net recently and learned that one of 'AI's' remaining 20, **Amanda Avila**, has Filipino roots. In the member forum about Asian singers, someone said that first it was Sharon Galvez being eliminated, then **J.R. Aquino**, then most recently **Melinda Lira**. Amanda is still in the top 20 (as of this writing)."

This is interesting to us, because we recall viewing the show some days ago, and when Melinda Lira was performing, we commented to a relative that she seemed to have a sort of Pinoy temperament and projection.

Melinda looked and sang in a completely "westernized" fashion, but there was something about her manner that struck us as sort of Filipino. If our colleague's "discovery" is correct, our hunch would turn out to have been correct.

As for Amanda Avila, her name also caught our attention, but her projection did not strike us as being as "Pinoy" as Melinda's. But she's still hanging in there (again, as of this writing), so we'll continue to watch out for her, and to wish her the best, even if it hasn't been firmly established that she's a Fil-Am talent (just in case!).

As for J.R. Aquino, we missed out on him completely!

Oscar's two faces

NOW that the 2004 Oscar awards have just been handed out, film people in Hollywood are again all agog over that gold-plated statuette that honors outstanding achievement in cinema.

On the other hand, others feel that awards aren't accurate gauges of excellence, so instead of determinedly competing for trophies, some even make it a point to turn them down!

Here, quote-unquote, are the two faces of the Oscar awards. First, on the positive side:

Jack Nicholson: I'd like to win more Oscars than **Walt Disney**, and I'd like to win them in every category!

Shirley MacLaine: I deserve this!

Sally Field: When I won my first one, I was so contained—numb. All I could think of was: Don't fall down! (I didn't have any underwear on.)

Bette Davis: I have always felt proud of my Oscars, because they were the result of votes from the members of my own profession.

Katharine Hepburn: Prizes are given, prizes are won. They are the result of competition. Any way you want to look at it, from birth to death, we are competing.

Helen Hayes: My advice to young actors winning Oscars: Enjoy! Don't wait years to find out what the award can give you in comfort and confidence.

Fred Astaire: The whole Oscar thing is an exciting and inspiring experience for both the performer and the public.

Gloria Grahame: My deepest feeling about the Oscar is that the people with whom I worked liked what I did.

Tatum O'Neal: The night I won my Oscar was like a shining light that never goes out!

Faye Dunaway: The time I won, for a brief moment, I felt that I had reached the pinnacle!

Glowing words! On the other hand, it's disconcerting to discover that other film people look down on film awards in general, and the Oscars in particular. And they aren't just sour-graping, because some of them are awardees in their own right. *Why* do they knock the Oscars?:

Kevin Kline: Anyone who's semi-conscious knows not to take the Academy Awards seriously. They're a game show!

Robert Redford: I grew up in Los Angeles and the Academy Awards seemed like California politics. Weird! An awful lot of extravagance for nothing. The awards always went to people who had done better work before or later.

Glenda Jackson: My mother polishes my awards to an inch of their lives, until the metal shows. That sums up the Academy Awards—all glitter on the outside and base metal coming through. Nice presents for a day, but they don't make you any better.

Paul Newman: A long time ago, winning was pretty important, but it's like chasing a beautiful woman. You hang in there for years, then she finally relents and you say, "I'm too tired."

Shirley MacLaine: It's not about deserving to win, because no one deserves to lose. I thought I might win for "The Apartment"—until **Elizabeth Taylor** had her tracheotomy!

Marlon Brando: I don't believe in awards of any kind. I don't even believe in the Nobel Peace Prize!

George C. Scott: Actors are the world's oldest underprivileged minority—looked upon as nothing but buffoons, one step above thieves and charlatans. These award ceremonies simply compound that image for me.

Cybill Shepherd: You always seem to remind yourself that Delacroix never won a prize, that Cezanne never sold a picture.

Barbra Streisand: Most awards, they don't give you unless you go and get them—did you know that? Terribly discouraging.

Let's give the last word to **James Woods:** I don't care what they say to the press. I've never met an actor in my life who doesn't have an acceptance speech going through his head everyday!

So, there.

Movies on TV

ON HBO today, 10:55 p.m., "Tears of the Sun." Tomorrow, 1:30 p.m., "21 Grams." March 9, 2:45 p.m., "Star Trek Generations."

On Cinemax, today, 6:30 a.m., "Marjorie Morningstar." Tomorrow, 2:25 a.m., "East of Eden"; 3:30 p.m., "Thoroughly Modern Millie." March 9, 1:45 p.m., "Billy Madison"; 9 p.m., "Unforgiven."

Nino and Jeffrey

THIS month, **Nino Alejandro** and **Jeffrey Hidalgo** perform in "Life's a Beach @ Ipanemo" with other solo artists and acoustic bands, at Ipanema Bar and Restaurant, Eastwood (421-7764.) Nino sings on Wednesdays, while Jeffrey is the featured singer on Thursdays.

'Lyndal's Lifeline'

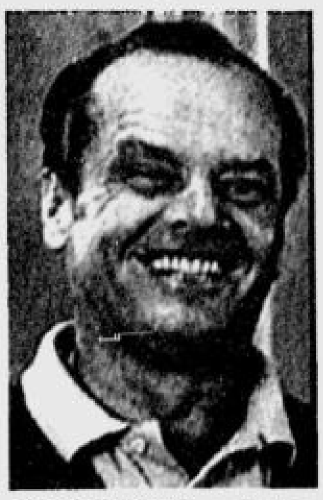
ANIMAL advocate **Lyndal Davies** hosts Animal Planet's "Lyndal's Lifeline" which premiered last night and telecasts Sundays at 8. Each week, the show visits a different wildlife rehabilitation center to give viewers a firsthand look at efforts to save endangered species. Animal Planet donates $10,000 to each center, and viewers vote online to decide which rehabilitation center should get an additional $10,000.

AMANDA Avila

What they say about the Oscars

STREISAND: "Discouraging"

KLINE: "It's a game"



NICHOLSON likes winning

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b. The deductible for total damage and loss claim shall be the first P1,000 or 25% of the current fair market value of the replacement unit whichever is greater.

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a. Proper Identifications
b. Bring the damage unit
c. Payment slip and/or Official Receipt
d. Accomplish Claims Report Form
e. Any requested documentation to support the claim
B. Loss Claim
a. Proper Identifications
b. Police Report & /or excerpt from the blotter (reported within 24 hours from the time of accident)
c. Payment slip and/or Official Receipt
d. Accomplish Claims Report Form within 48 hours
e. Any Proof of ownership
f. Any other requested documentation to support the claim

VII. CLAUSES
Tampering clause
Article 1250, New Civil Code
Waiver Clause
Documentary Stamps Clause
Changes in Policy Clause
Suit Against the Company
Cancellation Clause & Short Period Rate Scale
Settlement Clause

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THE REVERSIBLE suit

FOR THE "Prince of Pop"

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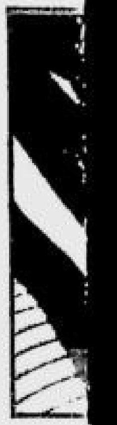

CAN YOU pick out the fancy belts?

Erik: Thinking big

'The fans give me clothes, and rather expensive things like perfumes, a digicam, and a portable DVD player. *Lahat ba ng artista ganito?*'

From page A2-1

rate shows and concerts, an look great.

"If you look at my favor boots, you'd think they're re sive. I just got them from People. A lot of people, inc manager, Tito Boy [Abund mented me when they sav wearing these.

HATS. "I love caps. I want collecting them before joined show biz, but I never had enough money. When my fans found out, they sent me a whole bunch of caps, like this Nautica cap from Canada.

"I don't know why this red Armani Exchange cap is my favorite. I wear it as often as possible. It's very comfortable.

"This navy blue bush hat is memorable. A friend gave this to me. I bring it every time I travel and it always gets lost. But I alw again. Like one time, we wer ham Park in Baguio when that it was gone. We looked place. And just when we wer give up, someone saw it han a tree.

"My only tip for people wh is, they should buy for co course its better if you pick nice colors, too."

BELTS. "My current favo brown leather belt. I have one that looks better. A frien me three years ago.

"This black Armani belt rable. I saw it in San Francis a store clearance sale. I thou pretty pricey for a belt, so I undecided, again and again.

"Another favorite is this bl belt from Bali. I bought it needed it for my suits. For m ready very expensive. *Pikit-binili ito* (I bought it with eye

"I own a lot of belts. Wha pends on my outfit. For con the bright-colored ones w tive] designs."

NECKTIES. "These are all not buy any single one. The orable piece I have is this pr and white tie that I wore first 'Night of the Champio brought it to the US, too. It with almost all of my suits.

"Honestly, I'm not too wearing neckties. I'm not su well."

SCENTS. "Clinic Happy been my favorite. I wanted t tle right when it came out, have the money then. It smel as if I've just gotten out of th

"Lacoste is also a favorite up four bottles. The scent is smells good even if you p much. A lot of people say good on me.

"But many others identi Giorgio Armani. They say smell this perfume, they around.

"For corporate shows, I we I also like Armani Mania— lasquez gave me this when I in her concert in Bulacan."

SUITS. "I was wearing t won in 'Star in a Million.' I Samson. Very versatile, beca versible (shows the mint g on the reverse side). Joey known for this. I used the r for one pictorial.

"Joey designs most of my give him complete freedom work—very clean and uni him through a friend. You'll shirt or suit comes from Jo Italian . . . and expensive.

"This navy blue suit I al

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6 GOLD (SDDS) THE AVIATOR
7 GOLD (DOLBY) HITCH
8 [illegible] LET THE LOVE BEGIN
9 [illegible] BUNSINSABA
10 [illegible] MASK-2 SON OF THE MASK

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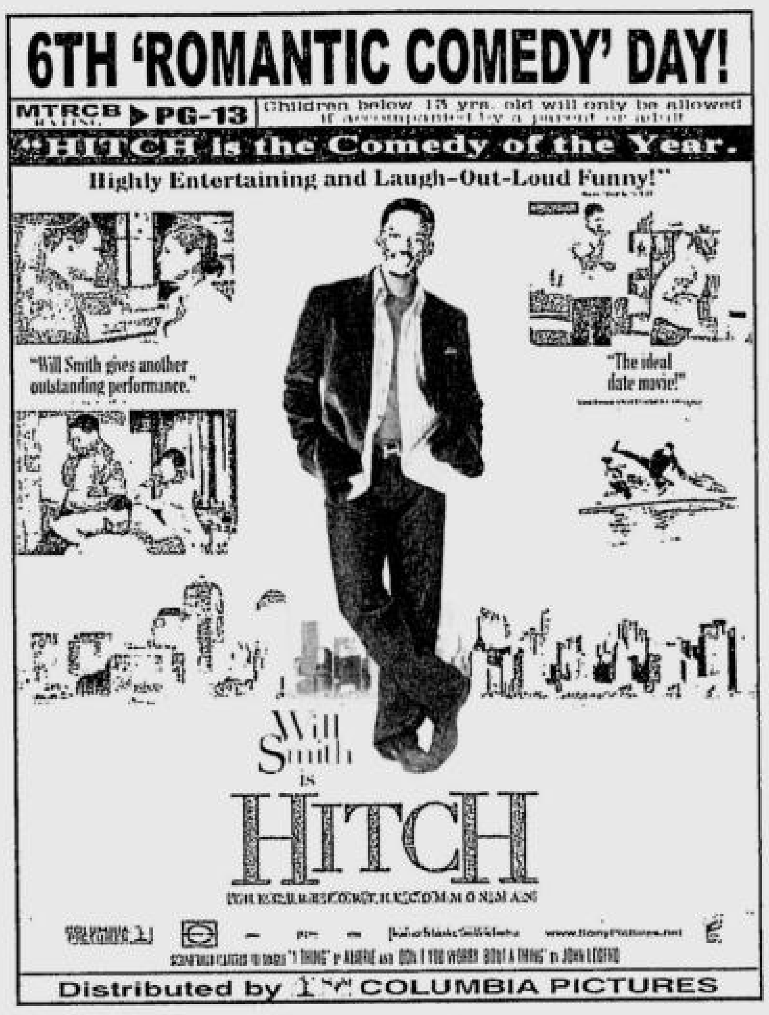

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OUIJA BOARD-BUNSHINSABA
12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30
SON OF THE MASK
1:30 / 3:50 / 6:10 / 8:30
SERIES OF UNFORTUNATE EVENTS
12:30 / 2:45 / 5:00 / 7:15 / 9:30
CONSTANTINE
12:30 / 2:45 / 5:00 / 7:15 / 9:30
THE AVIATOR
12:00 / 3:20 / 6:40
PHANTOM OF THE OPERA
1:00 / 3:50 / 6:40 / 9:30
RAY - LIFE STORY OF RAY CHARLES
4:05 / 9:25
SIDEWAYS
1:30 / 6:50

ALI MALL CINEMAS
❶ MILLION DOLLAR BABY
11:50 / 2:40 / 5:30 / 8:20
❷ CONSTANTINE
11:20 / 1:35 / 3:50 / 6:05 / 8:20
❸ HITCH
12:05 / 2:50 / 5:35 / 8:20
❹ OUIJA BOARD-BUNSHINSABA
11:45 / 1:55 / 4:05 / 6:15 / 8:25
❺ LET THE LOVE BEGIN
12:00 / 2:05 / 4:10 / 6:15 / 8:20
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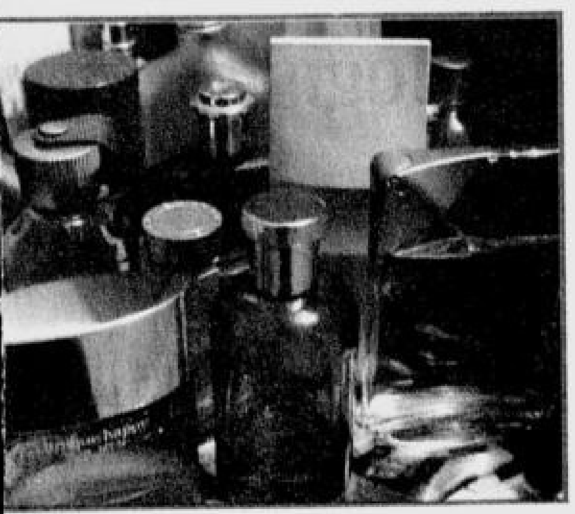
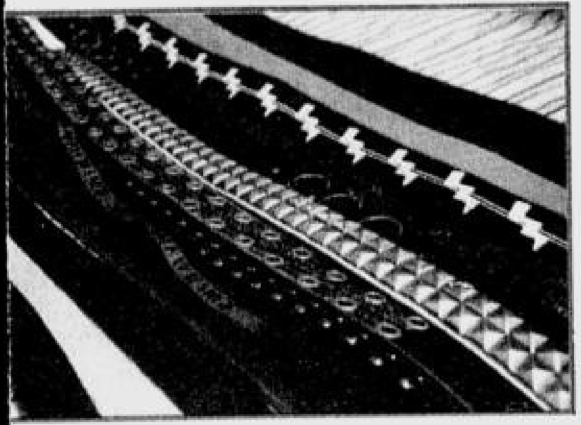


ERIK, the performer, likes shirts with details.



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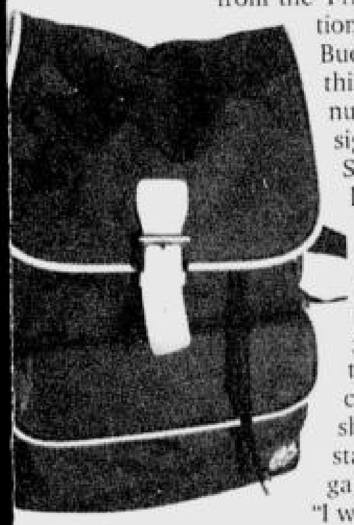
during 'Champion Showdowns.' *Malaki na ang kinita nito* (It has made quite a lot of money). This is from Joey, too. He used a purple floral fabric on the reverse side.

"And this Chinese-collared suit is from JC Buendia. I wore it during the 'Prince of Pop' concert. I like the cut. This is good for both ultra-formal and semiformal events. But I don't think I can use this again.



SHIRTS. "I got to keep nice shirts from the 'Prince of Pop' production, like this black JC Buendia polo. I wore this during my opening number. I like the design—like a Paul Smith. Many people like this shirt on me.

"I asked Joey Samson to make clothes that have many details. He's good at that. I use them during my concerts or when I do big shows opposite big stars, like Lea [Salonga] or Regine.

"I wear T-shirts when I'm not performing. I prefer whites because they feel clean and comfy. This cotton Armani Exchange shirt is also a favorite. I use it all the time. Super soft."

JEANS. "Although most of my clothes are gifts from friends, I also have a few pieces that I bought myself, like this pair of Kenneth Cole jeans. I like the fit and the details. I got it in the States.

"While I was in the US, I went shopping with my fans. They saw me looking at this pair that cost $89. I didn't buy it. At the airport before I left, they surprised me with it. I was touched. I wore this on my birthday last Oct. 10.

"When I buy jeans, I get the semi boot-cut types. People say they look good on me. I don't go for baggy ones or straight cuts. They look old. Basically, I want something comfortable. That's important because performers like me move around on the stage a lot."

JACKET. "I bought this denim jacket in Hong Kong. It's from Topman. It's unique. A lot of people have approached me to say they like it. I use this when I travel.

BAG. "I always use my navy blue Lacoste backpack. It's been with me everywhere. It's just the right size—not too big, not too small. I can put nearly all the things I need in this bag."

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Surgeon says need for cosmetic procedure can't be legislated

By Nini Valera

MOVIE stars may have to pay more for liposuction and other cosmetic treatments if House Bill 2831 is enacted into law.

The proposed bill imposes a 20 percent tax on "not only products but services such as those undertaken for aesthetic purposes, including but not limited to, cosmetic surgeries and body enhancement services."

Cosmetic surgeon Manuel Calayan, whose liposuction procedure on former TV talk show host Rosanna Roces catapulted him and his dermatologist wife Pie into show biz fame, is opposing the law.

"To classify cosmetic surgery as a non-essential type of service, and to tax the practitioners 20 percent for such service, is class legislation and counterproductive," Calayan said during a hearing on the proposed bill last month.

The doctor argued: "Contrary to your belief that the field of cosmetic surgery caters to pure caprices of women, this field of medicine was in fact developed two years before the US joined the First World War, through the Harvard contingent, consisting of 35 surgeons, three dentists and 75 nurses from Harvard, Columbia and Johns Hopkins."

Deformity

These medical practitioners developed radical ways to treat severe facial wounds, Calayan noted.

"Cosmetic surgery came into focus because of the need to restore the broken, mangled, distorted and devastated faces and bodies of soldiers during the War of the Trenches," he said. "What makes facial reconstruction on a veteran or even putting braces to a child's teeth any different from removing wrinkles from an old woman who needs to look younger to hold her job in sales, win back a philandering husband, enhance employment opportunities or build up a dying spirit? How misshapen must a nose be to be called a deformity? Is a hair transplant on a 20-year-old going bald different [from a hair transplant on] a man who goes bald at 60?"

MANUEL CALAYAN, cosmetic surgeon, and wife Pie, dermatologist—TV personalities themselves.

Calayan lamented that cosmetic surgery has always been equated with vanity. In the Philippines, liposuction is invariably associated with show biz denizens.

"I must admit that many celebrities and prominent people avail of our services," the doctor said. "If they are happy with our work, they flaunt the results. Again, it is unfortunate that these celebrities and prominent people are magnets of the tri-media, hence their new looks are highlighted, even published or broadcasted.

"But these celebrities and prominent people are just a fraction of our clientele, for most of the patients we treat, have a 'bitter need' or 'material necessity' to look better, for instance, find or maintain a job to support a family."

Calayan cited the book of Dr. Karl Menniger, "The Human Mind," where the Freudian theory of inferiority complex was explained and where Menniger recommended: "When it is possible by means of medical, surgical, dental or other devices to correct some of the actual inferiorities, such treatment is in fact indispensable."

He had chosen to specialize in cosmetic surgery, Calayan said, because of his desire to heal not only physical injuries, but afflictions that go beyond it. "We heal the emotional pain, broken spirit, and give back to these individuals a renewed feeling of themselves — capable of facing the world, making them more productive and forward looking."

Dangerous

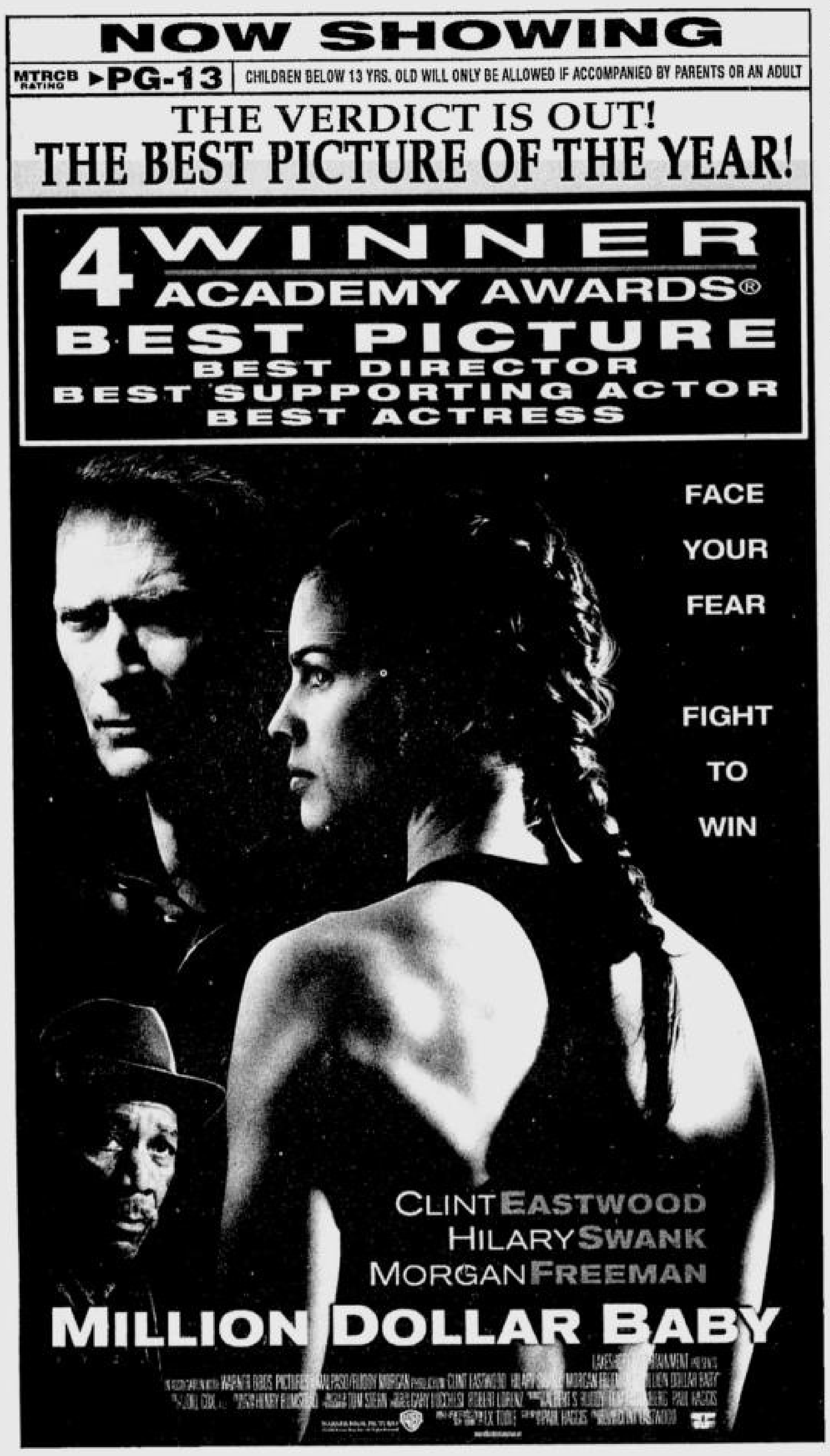
Calayan asked Congress not to "deviate from the historical and medical need for cosmetic surgery."

He described the proposed bill as a dangerous precedent, something that would have "the patient's medical need defined by the state... [instead of by] a doctor's prognosis." This, he said, "should never be an option."

Next to a nose lift, the most common cosmetic procedure among women is liposuction, which costs from upwards of P100,000 for a whole body treatment, according to Dr. Manny Calayan.

Dr. Pie Calayan told INQUIRER Entertainment that a growing number of her non-show biz female patients pay for treatments though a regular medical loan or insurance.

Among the couple's show biz clients are Ethel Booba, Gina Alajar, Elizabeth Oropesa, Chanda Romero and Alma Moreno. The Calayans host a segment in the GMA7 morning show "Unang Hirit."



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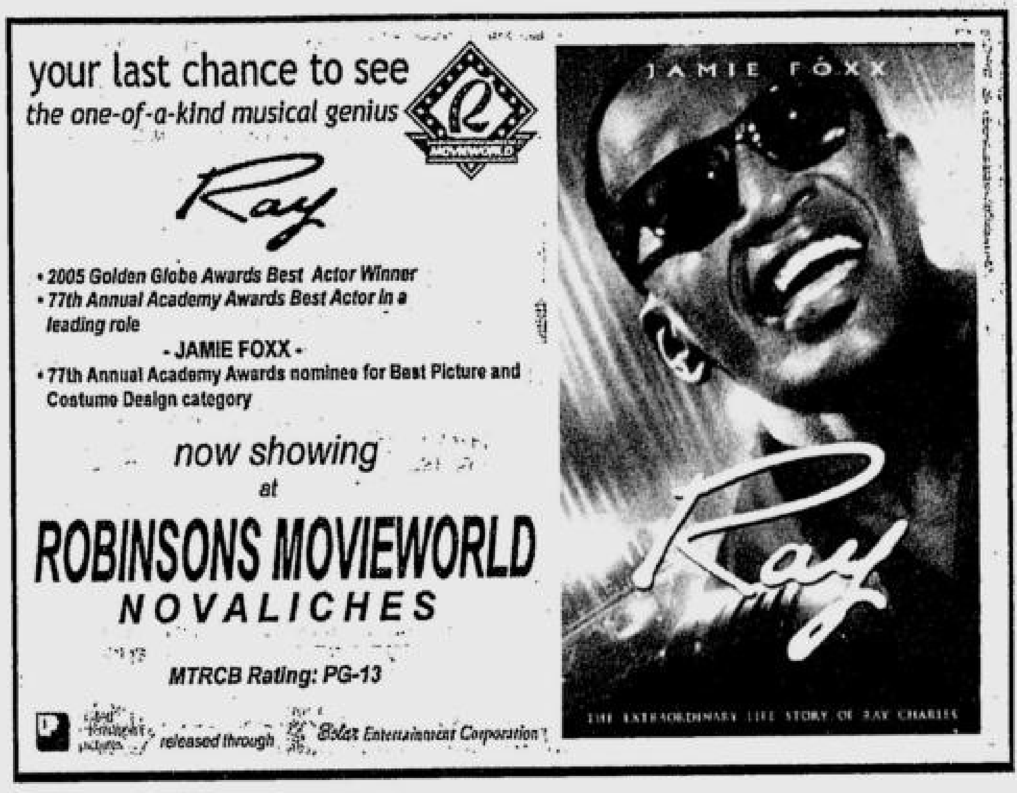

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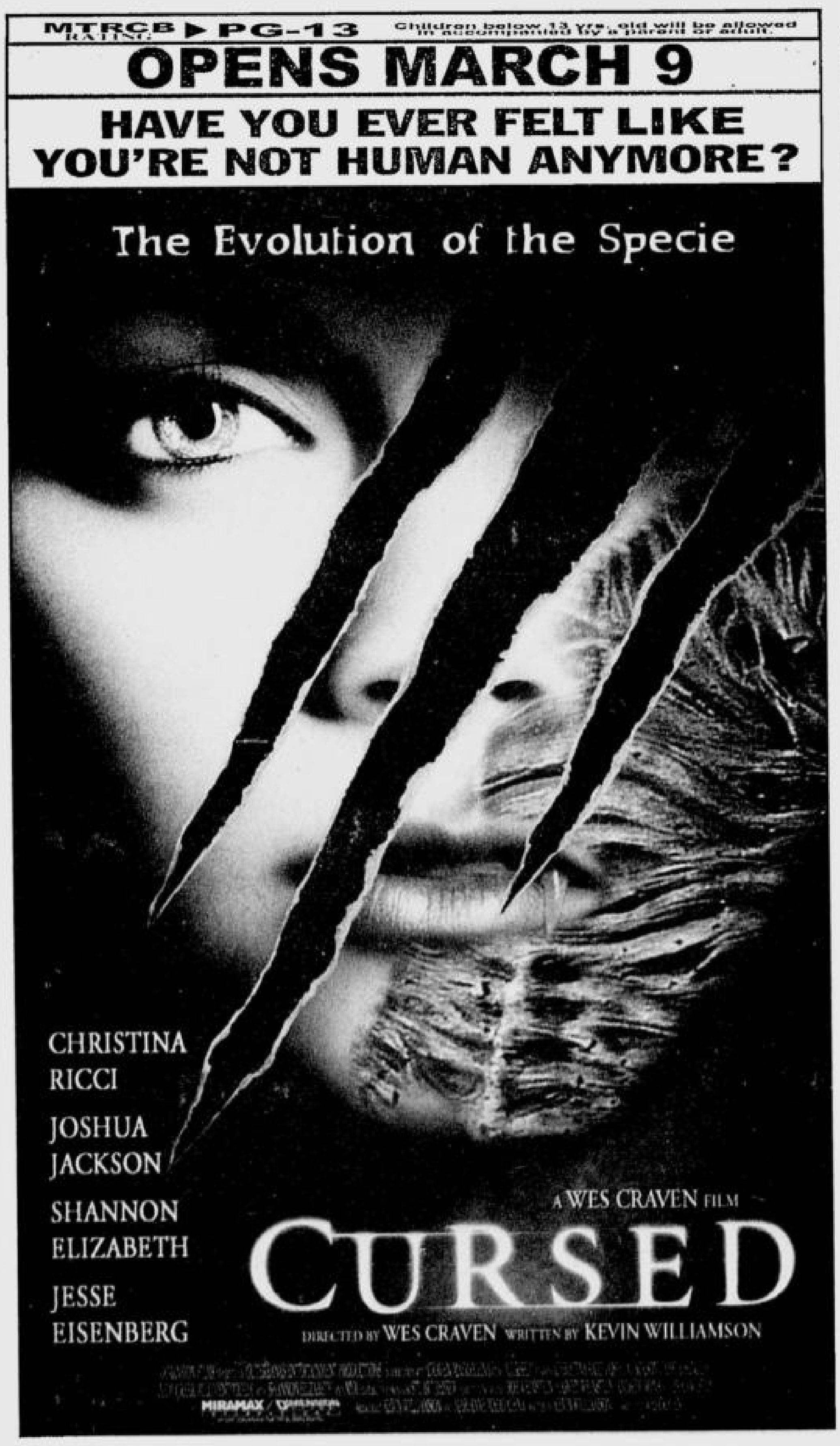

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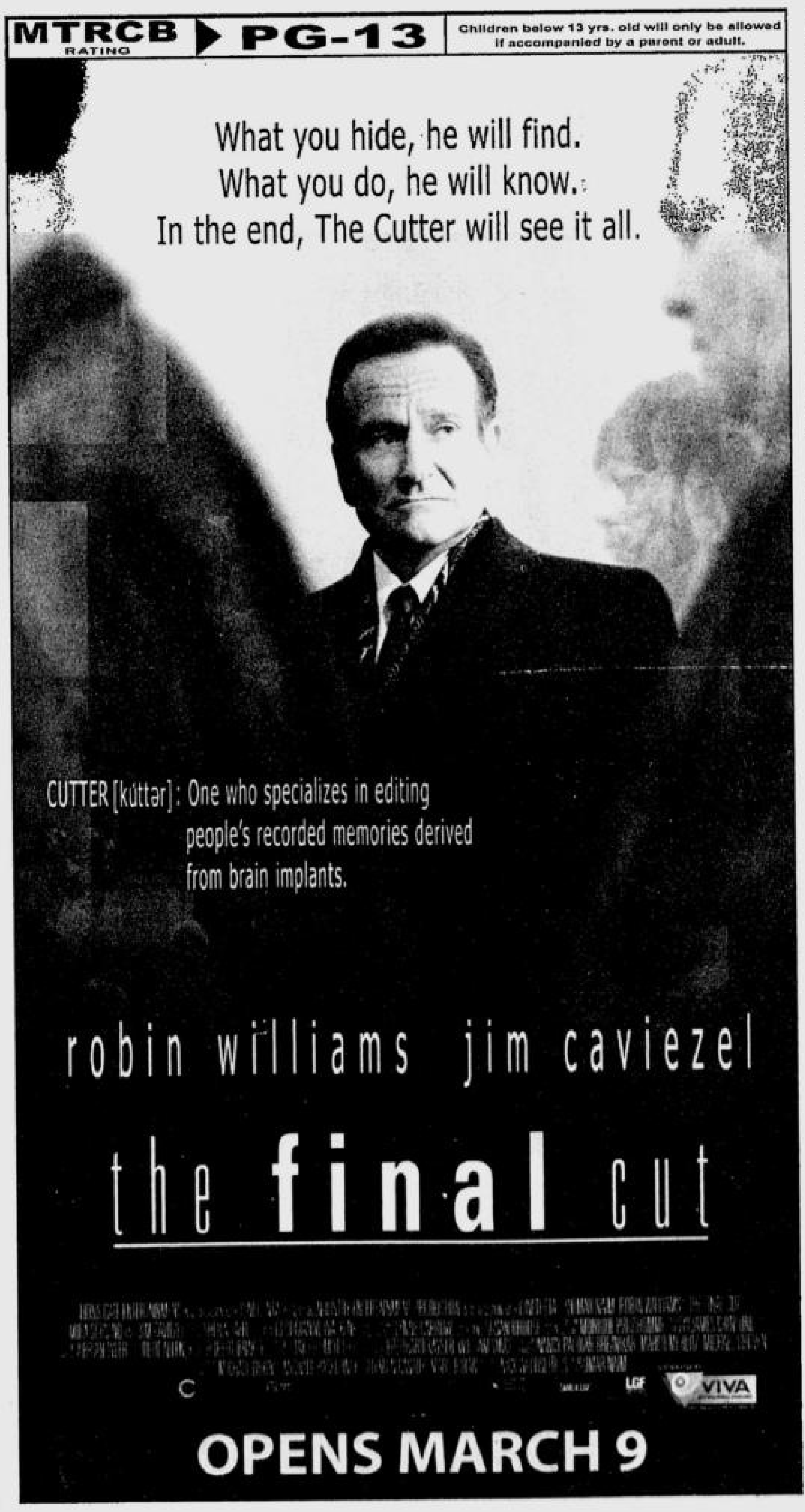

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CUTTER [kúttər]: One who specializes in editing people's recorded memories derived from brain implants.
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OPENS MARCH 9

Breaking the language barrier

By Oliver M. Pulumbarit
Contributor

FILMMAKER James L. Brooks has a gift for dissecting relationships down to fundamental components and making his assorted characters three-dimensionally vibrant. You get a deeper understanding of their motivations, because they're thrown into situations where their vulnerabilities are exposed and exploited. He did it painstakingly well in "As Good As It Gets" (1997), and he further explores layers of dysfunction in "Spanglish," which he both directed and wrote.

The film follows a single Mexican mother, Flor (Paz Vega), who tries her luck in America after a failed relationship. Her daughter, Christina (Shelbie Bruce), quickly adapts to the new environment, learns English and becomes Flor's translator.

Flor jumps at the opportunity to work for a rich, white, LA-based family as a maid, despite the fact that she speaks only Spanish. She gets along nicely with her female boss Deborah (Tea Leoni), but the husband, John (a chunky Adam Sandler), is a puzzle for the young helper. Flor doesn't know how to deal with him. Slowly, it becomes apparent that the household is not as perfect as it seems.

ADAM SANDLER is dignified and refreshingly subdued as an award-winning chef; Paz Vega is stunning as an object of both desire and envy.

> 'Spanglish' communicates through characterization

Deborah turns out to be a self-loathing perfectionist; John, for all his accolades as a master chef, carries a huge burden of insecurities. But they both treat Flor well, and with respect.

Things change when Deborah, obviously unhappy with her own children, starts doting on Flor's daughter, showering the girl with extravagant gifts. This doesn't sit well with the hard-working maid who, as a result, finally decides to learn English. While Deborah is oblivious that she's alienating her own family, John reaches out to Flor and becomes a real friend throughout the melodrama that has become his home life.

That's "Spanglish" in a not-so-small nutshell. Brooks carefully builds up lives that one might easily identify, or sympathize, with, and then complicates them all the way to a boiling point that is not entirely unpredictable.

The story is mostly believable, but the storytelling is far from perfect. Some such imperfections aside, "Spanglish" is made appealing by the actors. We've seen Adam Sandler go over-the-top moronic in every other movie; it's refreshing to see him portray someone so dignified and subdued.

He's got some real pain here, and it complements Leoni's spirited portrayal of a finicky thirtysomething wife. Vega, a dead ringer for Penelope Cruz, breathes charm and magnetic essence into Flor. She is gorgeous enough to be believable as an object of both desire and envy.

Also a standout is Cloris Leachman as Deborah's mom Evelyn. Her scenes, thrown in mostly for comic relief, nevertheless brings out her deeper side. The boozing and aging ex-jazz singer that she plays is the sober and strong voice of reason in several key moments.

"Spanglish" gets its point across: language barriers are confining only if people are unwilling to move past them. No, it's not a romantic comedy; it's just made to look that way in the trailer. The movie succeeds in declaring the universality of pride, love and all things emotional and sappy, but it communicates quite well through straightforward characterization—a language that's easily understood.

Ragnarok Online steps up

LEVEL UP!, local publisher of the online role-playing game Philippine Ragnarok Online (pRO), launches its new episode, Amatsu and Kunlun: A Tale of Two Cities, on March 12 through simultaneous events at the Fort's Market! Market!, Ayala Center Parking Lot in Cebu, and Matina Town Square in Davao.

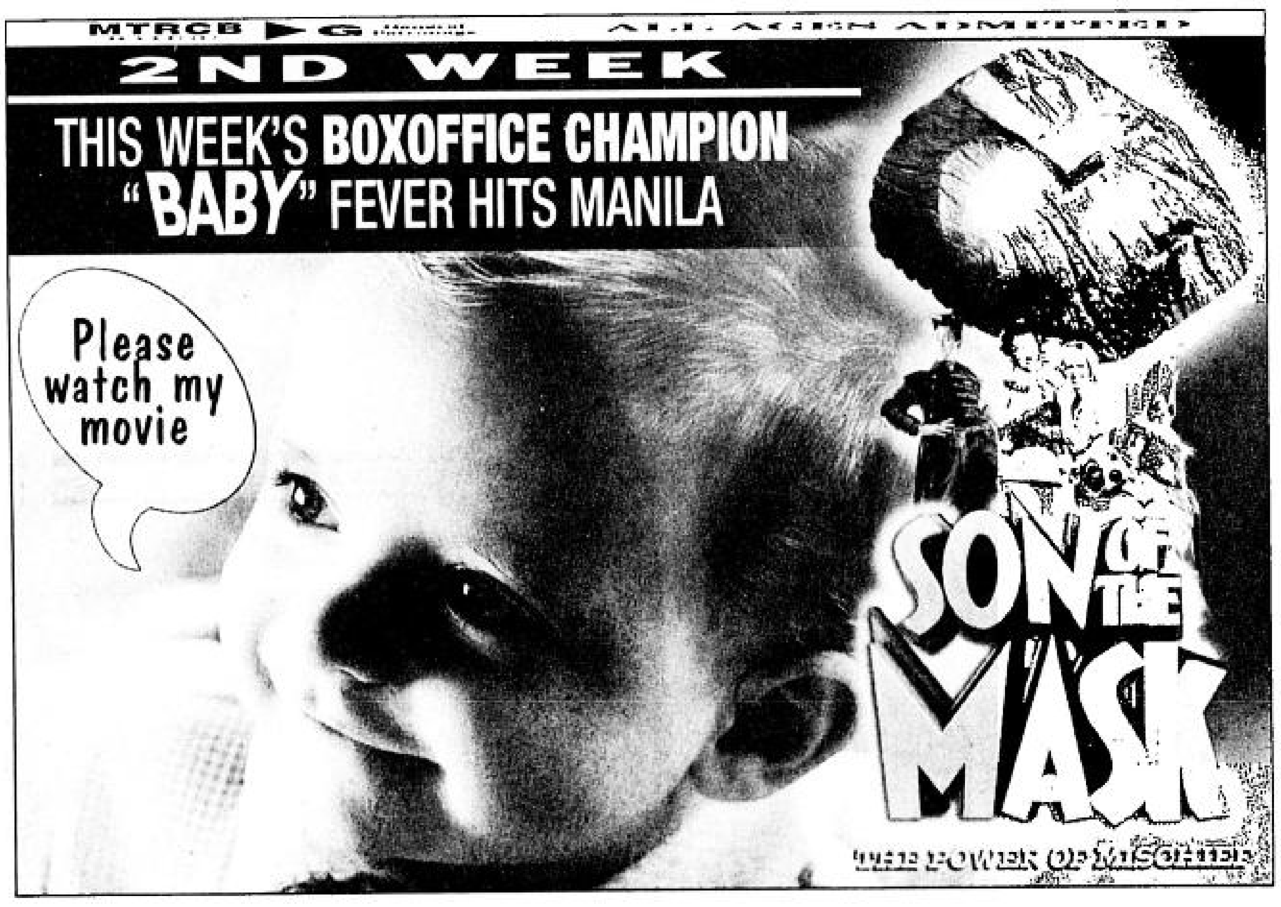
This sixth expansion to Ragnarok Online features oriental-theme maps, the Super Novice job class, and the Wedding System, which will allow pRO players to "get married" in the game and play as a couple.

The two new maps are Amatsu and Kunlun, setting for the latest episode. An intriguing tale of romance and high adventure, the episode also runs as a comic strip in the Sunday INQUIRER Comics section.

Players have the chance to join an exciting SMS poll to help Shosuro Ran, young prince of Amatsu, decide who will win his heart. All they have to do is text TALE to 29769 and choose between Princess Fei and Willow.

Participants could win a trip to Hong Kong for three, with pocket money and hotel accommodations, plus other prizes. The ending that text voters will choose will be staged on March 12 in a play to be performed by Auddie Gemora's Stages Productions.

For more information, check out http://www.levelupgames.ph/ragnarok/tale.



Evolving into a fierce animal in "CURSED"

"CURSED"

Combining special effects and terror

FROM THE DIRECTOR OF 'SCREAM' SERIES

Reminiscent of popular monster movies like **"An American Werewolf in London"** and **"Van Helsing"**, the film **"CURSED"** artfully blends special effects with horror. This is a very fine line to tiptoe but if anyone can do it, *Wes Craven* can. And so can screenwriter *Kevin Williamson* (Scream). Put those people together, along with the extremely talented **Christina Ricci**, and you've got a tail-wagging night out at the movies.

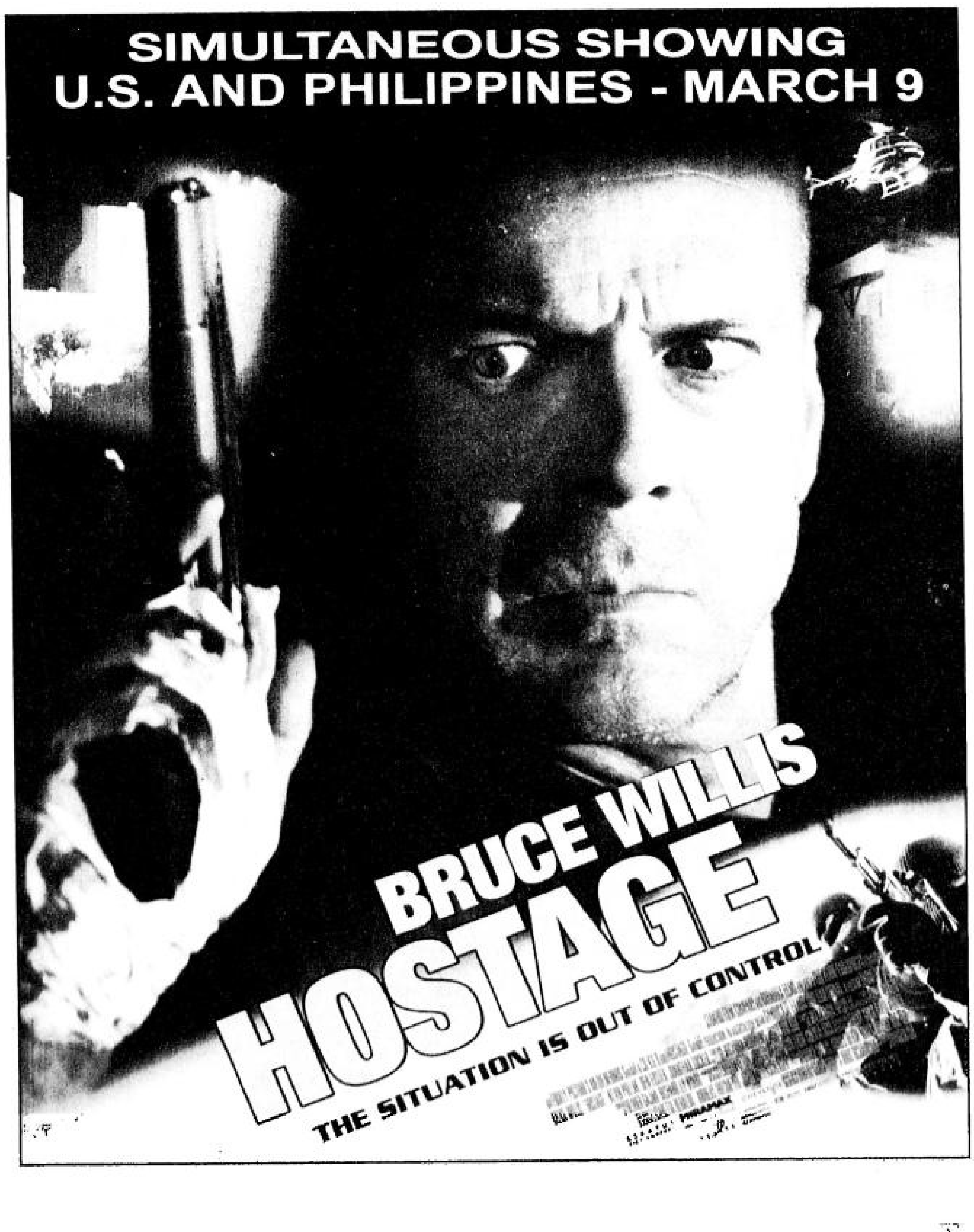
It is a moonlit night in Los Angeles, when something lurking in the shadows causes their car to suddenly swerve off the road, a teenaged brother and his career-driven sister emerge relatively unscathed, but forever changed by the accident. Suddenly, they noticed that they are not human anymore, the siblings find themselves blessed with increased physical strength, heightened sensibilities and undeniable allure to everyone around them. But, what if what happened to them that night wasn't just an accident and what seemed like fate was really something more? It is only a matter of time before Ellie (**Christina Ricci**) and Jimmy (**Jesse Eisenberg** "Rodger Dodger") can no longer control these impulses because their newfound power comes with a price that they never expected to pay and a mystery that only they can solve.

Wes Craven's "Cursed" also stars **Portia de Rossi** (*Ally Mcbeal*) and **Shannon Elizabeth** (*American Pie*) and **Joshua Jackson** (*Dawson's Creek*).

The Dimension Films project was put on an extended hiatus during the summer so the filmmakers could plan for more special effects than originally anticipated and further develop the ending.

To say much more would require spoilers and I don't want to wreck your fun. And "fun" is exactly what this movie is: It's a rollicking popcorn flick, so don't go in expecting Oscar material and you'll enjoy yourself immensely. It's got some cool special effects and genuine fear sequences that do get under your skin and won't let go even after the credits have rolled *(if you've driven to the theater and parked in a shadowy underground structure... Have fun walking back to your car!)*. [By Garth Franklin, darkhorizons.com]

ADVT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BRUCE WILLIS
HOSTAGE
THE SITUATION IS OUT OF CONTROL

ENTERTAINMEN

ZHANG ZIYI will be directed by Rob Marshal in "Memoirs of a Geisha."

And the 2006 Oscar could go to…

LOS ANGELES—"Million Dollar Baby?" Old news. Jamie Foxx? Ancient history.

It's time to set odds on which films will dominate next year's Academy Awards.

For this crystal-ball exercise, we're looking for that Oscar feeling, and we figure people such as Steven Spielberg, Peter Jackson, Ron Howard, Roman Polanski must have it in spades.

And the Oscar could go to:

"Cinderella Man"—Oscar winners Russell Crowe and Renee Zellweger star in the story of Depression-era boxer Jim Braddock, who gets a second chance in the ring. The academy loves underdog stories, Ron Howard ("A Beautiful Mind") directs and Crowe punches people out.

"Memoirs of a Geisha"—Rob Marshall ("Chicago") directs this adaptation of the novel about an orphan girl (Zhang Ziyi) who becomes a queen-bee madame kept in style by powerful men. Sex, sumptuous sets, exotic locales, a beautiful leading lady poised for a breakout role.

"Kingdom of Heaven"—Ridley Scott ("Gladiator") directs the saga of a battling knight (Orlando Bloom) in Jerusalem during the Crusades. If anyone can make a Crusades story palatable in this politically correct age, Scott's the man.

"War of the Worlds"—Steven Spielberg and Tom Cruise spin the spectacle of sci-fi spectacles, a new take on H.G. Wells' invaders-from-Mars classic. Everyone secretly loves to see the world toasted.

"All the King's Men"—Sean Penn stars in this update of Robert Penn Warren's novel loosely based on Huey Long. Penn in the meatiest role since his Oscar win for "Mystic River," backed by Anthony Hopkins, Kate Winslet, Patricia Clarkson, Jude Law and James Gandolfini.

"Charlie and the Chocolate Factory"—Johnny Depp has scored Oscar nominations as a sashaying pirate and a repressed Edwardian playwright. Can he earn another as Willy Wonka? Tim Burton's remake offers endless visual possibilities, and the story of candyman Willy playing tour guide to children is a beloved one for academy boomers.

'Jarhead"—Sam Mendes ("American Beauty") aims for another mix of drama and macabre humor with this tale of an elite sniper unit in the Gulf War. British theater vet Mendes has a keen outsider's eye for stories about Americans. And enlisting Jamie Foxx to co-star doesn't hurt.

"King Kong" —"Lord of the Rings" maestro Peter Jackson directs a remake of the great ape biopic, with Naomi Watts as the new Fay Wray. After elevating the fantasy genre to Oscar glory by treating hobbits with dead earnestness, Jackson's madman enough to do the same for a giant gorilla.

"The New World"—Colin Farrell tries to put "Alexander" behind him in this colonial tale of John Smith and Pocahontas, from director Terrence Malick ("The Thin Red Line"). Malick hardly ever makes movies, but when he does, they're awesome.

"Oliver Twist"—For his first film since winning the best-director Oscar for "The Pianist," Roman Polanski has a go at Charles Dickens' classic of an orphan among pickpockets. Oscar winner Ben Kingsley as the nefarious Fagin. Doesn't everyone prefer Sir Ben in "Sexy Beast" demeanor rather than "Gandhi" mode?

"The Producers"—Nathan Lane and Matthew Broderick reunite for a movie based on a stage hit based on a movie, about con men bilking investors on a Nazi musical. A best-picture trophy for producer Mel Brooks would make a nice companion bookend for his screenplay Oscar on the 1968 original.

"Walk the Line"—Joaquin Phoenix is the man in black, Johnny Cash, with Reese Witherspoon as wife June Carter. In the same way people went, "Huh? Jamie Foxx as Ray Charles? … Oh, yeah. I see it," Phoenix bears a curious resemblance to Cash. But can he lip-synch?

"Untitled Steven Spielberg Project"—This features Eric Bana in a drama chronicling events at the 1972 Olympics in Munich, when 11 Israeli athletes and coaches were killed by Palestinian militants. It's his most "important" film since "Saving Private Ryan."

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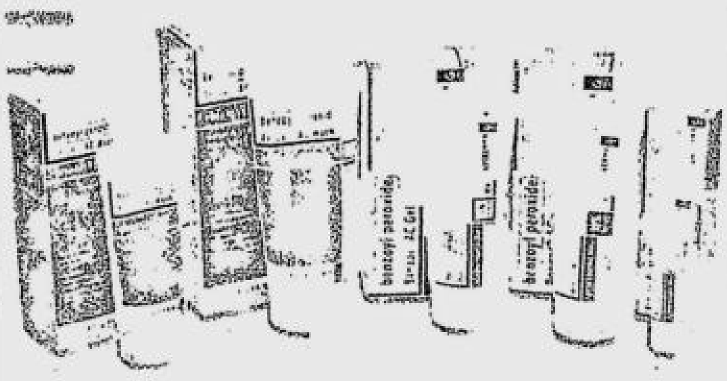
Galderma introduces Benzac AC line



GALDERMA has introduced its Benzac® AC line of products —a set of topical, over-the-counter (OTC) brand that effectively fights and kills pimple-causing germs called P. acnes. The result is clearer, smoother skin after the treatment period.

Benzac® AC is the only Benzoyl Peroxide (BPO) in the market today that carries the Acrylates Copolymer (AC) technology, a breakthrough skin-treatment patented by Galderma that not only eliminates pimple-causing germs but also prevents skin from over-drying.

Plain BPO products normally over-dry the skin during treatment. Benzac® AC lessens the recurrence of pimples and provides long-term protection against skin blemishes.

Highly recommended by dermatologists when it comes to right skin maintenance, Benzac® AC provides proper skin hydration by releasing glycerin beads. This process allows the skin to become properly moisturized even erasing pimples.

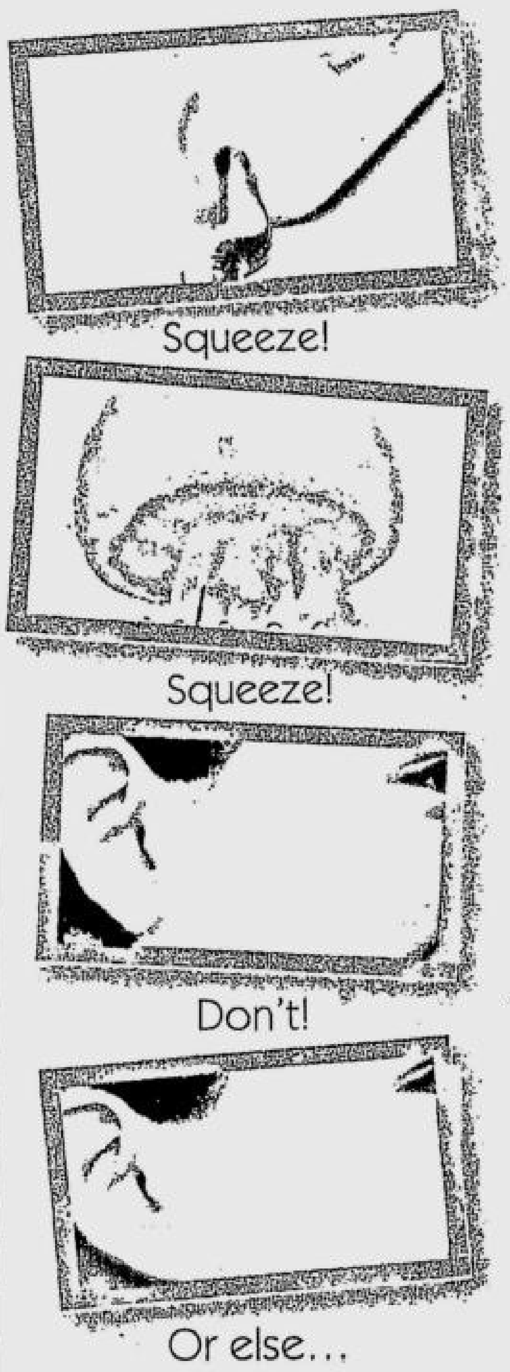
"Benzac® AC is an effective brand that teenagers and young adults can use in treating their pimples. Its anti-inflammatory property takes away these stubborn pimples in due time," consultant dermatologist Dr. Flordeliz Casintahan said. In addition, Benzac® AC has less drying effect than other BPO brands available in the market, thus causing less irritation on the face which is a very common side effect in acne treatment.

"Adolescents normally develop pimples because of their active sebaceous glands which are stimulated by hormonal change or surge. These glands increase oil production that result in clogged pores and eventually form acne," Dr. Casintahan added.

Benzac® AC helps treat mild to moderate pimple formations on the skin. Benzac® AC should be applied to affected areas of the skin twice daily (preferably in the morning and evening). To further supplement pimple treatment, use Benzac® AC Wash before applying Benzac® AC gel. If pimples still persist, always consult a trusted dermatologist.

Now available over-the-counter in all Mercury Drug outlets and other leading drugstores nationwide, Benzac® AC comes in varying strengths and tube sizes: 5 percent (15 and 60 grams), and 10 percent (60 grams); while Benzac® AC Wash comes in two tube sizes: 50 and 100 grams (5 percent).

In the Philippines, Galderma was established in May 1996. Aside from Benzac® AC, Galderma's growing product portfolio includes Cetaphil® Gentle Skin Cleanser and Nutraderm® Lotion as well as *adapalene* (topical retinoid) and *calcitriol* (topical anti-psoriasis drug).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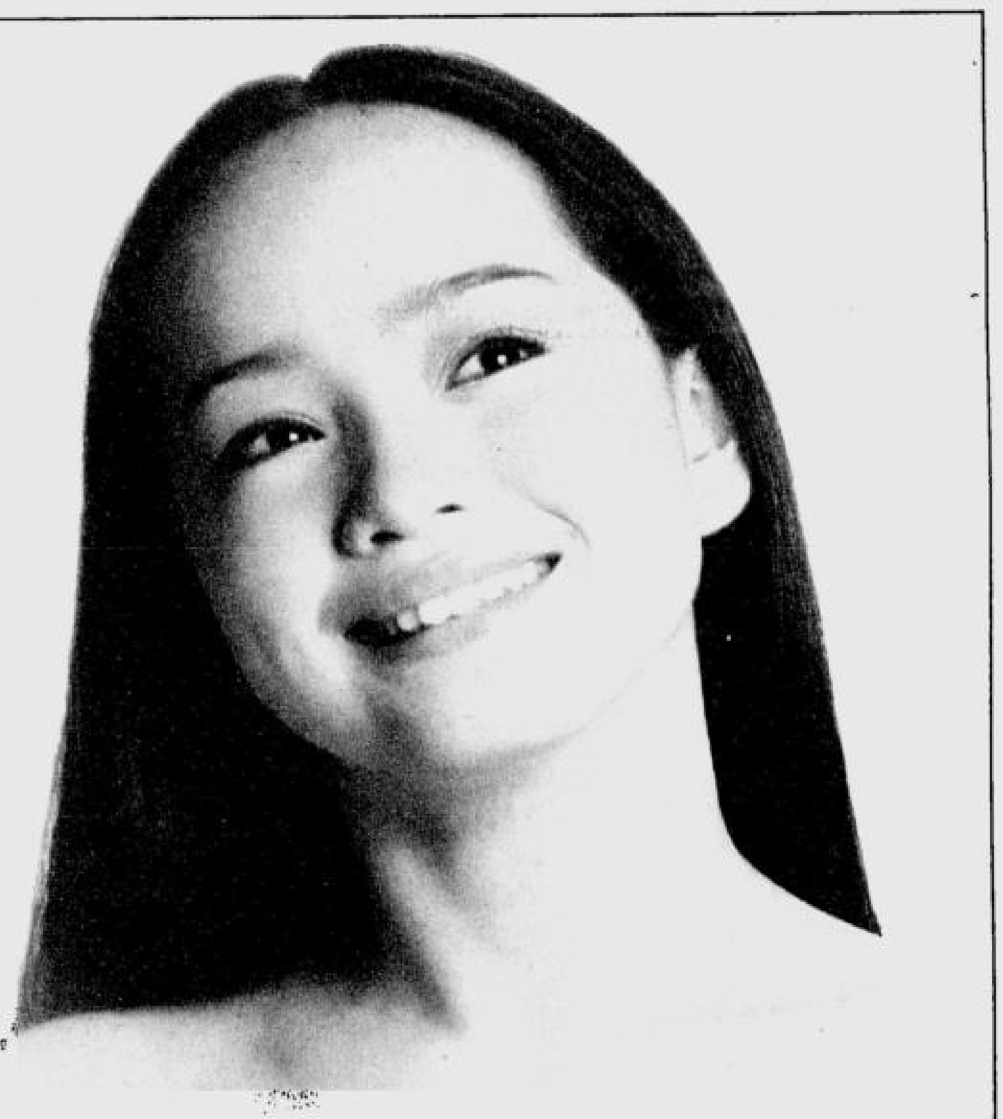

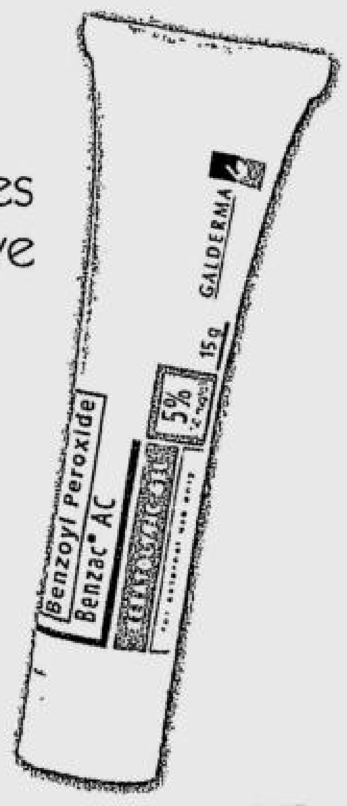

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BSP wants IMF monitoring to stay

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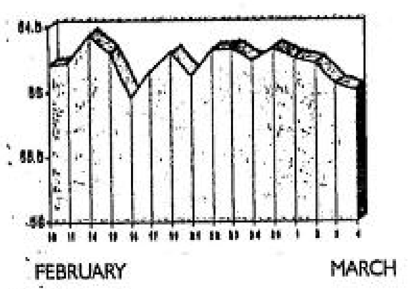

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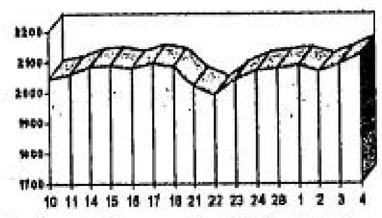
STOCK MARKET

Increased selling seen this week

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



INVESTORS are expected to start selling portions of their holdings this week to generate enough cash for the much-awaited stock rights and initial public offerings of blue-chip companies this month.

"All these IPOs and rights offers need cash which may cause some selling," Jojo Gonzales, head of research at Philippine Equity Partners Inc. said.

Last week, the Philippine Stock Exchange composite index climbed 2.48 percent or 51.5 points to 2,124.69 points.

The average daily turnover was 4.5 billion shares worth P1.6 billion.

Analysts attributed the market's rally last week to good news like February's inflation rate falling within expectations at 8.5 percent, although faster than the previous month's 8.4 percent.

Government securities have also shown strong performance after Congress approved certain tax measures that were seen critical in addressing the country's budget shortfall.

The improved sentiment was evident in the increase in the number of companies that expressed interest in tapping public funds for additional capital such as Manila Water Co. Inc., which is slated to conduct its maiden offering this month, and holding firm SM Investment Corp., which is currently holding an international roadshow for its

INCREASED/ B8

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas said it was keen on keeping the country's post-program monitoring (PPM) arrangement with the International Monetary Fund to boost the government's efforts to put its finances in order.

The BSP said this in reaction to the call made by Bicol Rep. Jose Salceda, chair of the House committee on economic affairs, for the termination of the PPM so that Malacañang could gain more public support for its tax reform programs.

Salceda said the government could be more effective in determining its own fiscal course without the PPM. He said the IMF prescriptions were simply depriving the President the flexibility in making decisions and managing the state's affairs.

The Philippines "graduated" from the last funding program of the IMF in 2001 but remained under its supervision since then.

The PPM calls for frequent consultations between the IMF and its members whose funding programs have ended but which continue to have outstanding credit with the Fund.

These consultations are focused mainly on policies that affect the concerned country's external viability, including its balance of payments position.

The IMF conducts a review on the Philippines twice a year under the PPM. Technically, the IMF can offer some advice but it can no longer impose policy conditions as done in the past under funding programs.

"Let's get our reforms in place before we even talk about an exit from the PPM," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura told reporters.

Salceda said the termination of the PPM would be next in his agenda after the reforms on the value added tax (VAT) system were passed.

He said the perception that the country was still under the wings of the IMF was adding difficulties in making the public appreciate the need to bite the bullet in this fiscal consolidation process.

"We know we need to raise revenues because we need it, not because the IMF tells us so," Salceda said.

"For now we need it (the PPM)," Buenaventura said explaining that there were still doubts about the country's ability to meet its external commitments. He said the PPM would help keep the government on guard in maintaining fiscal discipline.

"Let's not dismantle something that helps us until we're sure we are already on a solid ground," he said.

Even with the passage of certain new tax measures, such as the reform on excise taxation and the lateral attrition, Buenaventura said lingering doubts about the country's fiscal consolidation remained.

In January, global credit rating firm Standard & Poor's slashed the Philippines' long-term sovereign foreign currency credit rating by one notch to BB- from BB, citing the government's "inadequate" response to its fiscal problems. A month after, Moody's also cut the country's sovereign credit ratings by two notches, warning of heightened vulnerability to economic, financial and political shocks due to ballooning public debt.

"We're just saying that we can keep it (PPM) for now. It's easy to

BSP/ B8

Shipbuilding: Sailing back to the glory days

By Joan Orendain
Contributor

(First of two parts)

SPECIAL REPORT

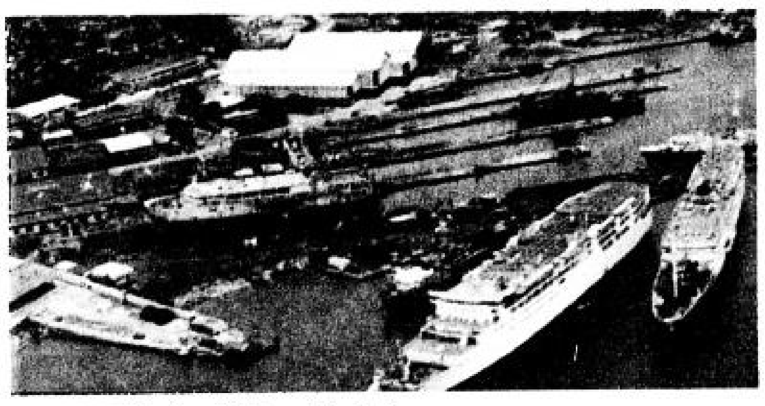
THE GLORY days of Philippine shipbuilding were in the 16th and 17th centuries, when the country led the rest of the Orient in the seafaring trade.

Three-masted Spanish galleons loaded with treasure, which swashbuckling English pirates plundered, were constructed in Cavite, Iloilo, Pangasinan, Sorsogon, Masbate, Albay, Mindoro and Cebu.

Made of Philippine mahogany, the cannonballs of marauding buccaneers merely bounced off the galleons' hardwood decks.

In modern times, by virtue of geography, we are dependent on ships for domestic and overseas transport, fishing, defense, offshore patrol, customs interdiction, and search and rescue activities.

The demand for ships is great, but most, if not all, of the steel-hulled ships plying our waters are imported, largely as second-hand reconditioned ships.


KEPPEL Philippines' shipyard in Cebu

The boatbuilding industry remains strong, as in the days of yore. Shipwrights still build wooden-hulled boats that pro-

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Change in IRA allocation system sought

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL Economic and Development Authority is pushing for the restructuring of the system used in the distribution of the internal revenue allotment (IRA) to local government units.

The IRA, which forms part of the national budget, is a fund earmarked for the LGUs' respective annual budget and projects.

According to Neda Director General Romulo Neri, the distribution of the IRA had to be adjusted to make LGUs play a more active role in the governments' efforts to achieve economic growth targets.

Neri, who is also the country's economic planning secretary, said the restructuring of the system had to be done in such a way that the budget for each LGU would depend on their financial capacity. This way, the distribution of the IRA can be more equitable.

"This means richer cities or municipalities will have less IRA so that more funds can be given to those that are earning less," Neri said in an interview Friday.

At present, the budget for an LGU is determined depending on whether it is a city, municipality, province or barangay. The size of the land area and population are also considered.

Neri said the proposal to restructure the distribution of IRA would require legislation because it would call for amendments to the Local Government Code.

The code states that 40 percent of the revenue collected by the national government should be set aside for the IRA. The law also states that of the amount, provinces get a 23-percent share; municipalities, 34 percent; cities, 23 percent and barangays, 20 percent

Neri said the executive branch should push for the legislation of the needed adjustment as soon as Congress finishes the hearings for the bills seeking an increase in the value-added tax rate from 10 to 12 percent, and the lifting of the VAT exemptions of several products and services.

The Arroyo administration's economic team is working on convincing the legislature to approve the said VAT proposals, which are expected to raise over P60 billion in additional revenue for the government. The VAT measures are the major revenue-raising programs being pushed by the government's economic team to address the country's fiscal problem.

Once the VAT bills are passed, Neri said, the government should start focusing on the adjustment of the IRA.

PNOC-EC to complete Malampaya stake sale

MAÑALAC

PNOC Exploration Corp., a subsidiary of Philippine National Oil Co., is expected to complete soon the divestment of 49 percent of its 10-percent stake in the Malampaya natural gas project in Palawan.

PNOC-EC president and chief executive officer Eduardo Mañalac said "only a few more steps need to be taken before we conclude the now two-year-old process of privatizing a portion of PNOC-EC's stake in the project."

Mañalac said the partial divestment was in compliance with the condition set by the government on a sovereign guaranty provided to a $130-million credit facility from Citibank. PNOC, in turn, lent the facility to PNOC-EC for the acquisition of its participating interest in the Malampaya project. The facility stands currently at $175 million.

Mañalac said the government, through the Department of Finance, required PNOC-EC to privatize this interest as a condition to the sovereign guarantee.

Mañalac said the privatization process began in 2001 after PNOC and PNOC-EC formed a privatization committee to map out divestment options and oversee the process. The privatization plan was approved in 2002 by the committee, the boards of PNOC and PNOC-EC, the Department of Finance and the government's privatization council, he added.

Mañalac said the committee also conducted an international marketing roadshow in 2003 to draw prospective strategic investors into the privatization program. Due to a failed bidding last year, however, a negotiated sale was recommended.

Mañalac said the approval of the negotiated sale process and its guidelines by the Cabinet-level Privatization Council last year "has significantly helped hasten the divestment program."

The council is chaired by the secretary of finance with the secretaries of budget and management, trade and industry, justice and the National Economic Development Authority head as voting members.

ZERO TARIFF ISSUE

Court junks steel firms' plea

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE COURT of Appeals dismissed local steel firms' petition seeking the nullification of an executive order that granted zero tariffs on hot-rolled coils to qualified companies.

The Filipino Galvanizers Institute Inc., Puyat Steel Corp., Sonic Steel Industries Inc., Tower Steel Corp. and Union Galvasteel Corp. filed the petition last Feb. 4.

The companies insisted that Executive Order No. 237, which was signed on May 4, 2000, countered the Iron and Steel Act that allowed the granting of tariff incentives only for raw materials such as iron ore, manganese and cooking coal.

Hot-rolled coils, the first product produced out of steel slabs, are made into cold-rolled coils which are further processed to make thin sheets. Thin sheets are used for the making of flat products such as roofings, panels and tools.

FGI and the other firms' petition stemmed from the Board of Investments' failure to cancel a certificate of eligibility for incentives issued to a rival company.

The petitioners said that due to this failure, the government lost some P200 million in tax revenue.

In a decision promulgated last Feb. 15, the appellate court said the petition was "fatally defective" as it did not come with a sworn certification of non-forum shopping as required by the Rules of Civil Procedure.

"The petition is, likewise, not accompanied by a written explanation as to why the service of the petition upon the respondents was not done personally, [thereby violating the Rules]," said Associate Justice Celia C. Librea-Lealogo, who penned the ruling.

Named respondents to the petition was Steel Corp., the Office of the President/ Department of Trade and Industry/BOI and the Board of Customers.

Further, Lealogo said the petitioners "have pursued a wrong procedural remedy."

"The petition, although styled as a petition for certiorari, prohibition and mandamus, in essence seeks a declaration by this court of the illegality and validity of EO 237," she said.

Lealogo added that the Court of Appeals had no jurisdiction on the petition.

Aside from that, she said the respondent government agencies that belonged to the Executive Department could not be prohibited from exercising their discretionary functions.

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NOTICE

The public is hereby notified that on February 1, 2005, the **MARKET INTEGRITY BOARD** of the **PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE** approved and issued its **INTERNAL RULES OF PROCEDURE.** The rules shall be effective 15 days from its publication on the PSE website.

Those who wish to obtain a copy of the Rules may either download it directly from the PSE website, http://www.pse.com.ph or, obtain a photocopy from the **MARKET REGULATORY OFFICE.**

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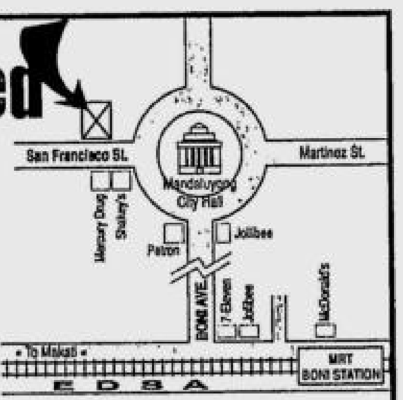

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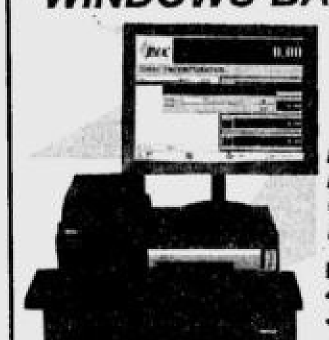

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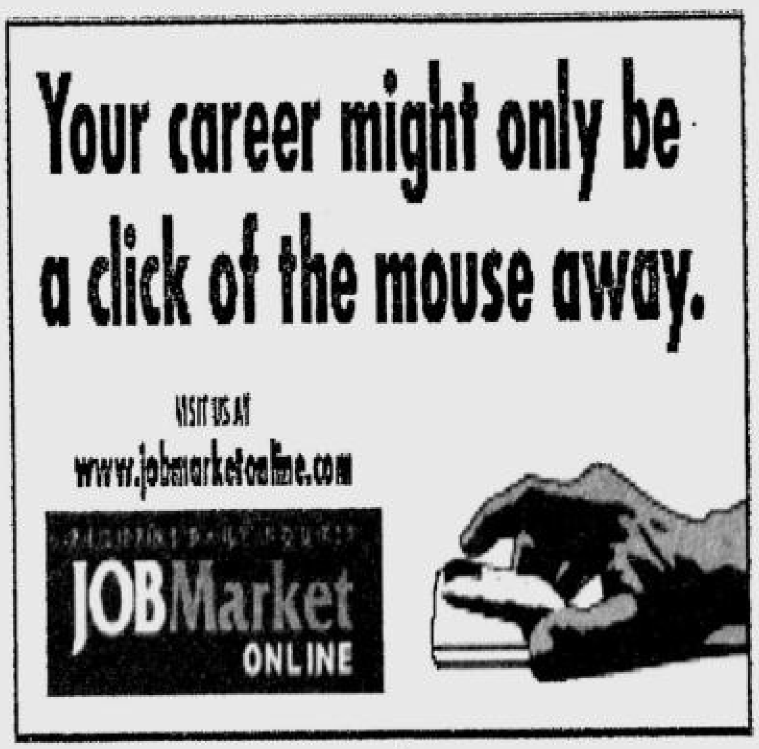
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Ayala triples golden handcuffs

COCKTALES

Victor C. Agustin

THE FAMILY-CONTROLLED Ayala Corp. plans to even tighten the golden handcuffs now binding themselves to their key executives.

The Zobel father-and-sons team, and their Japanese partners in the Ayala board, have proposed to triple beginning this year the number of shares available under the conglomerate's already attractive executive stock option.

"The main objective of the increase ... is to continue the very effective reward mechanism that has enabled the company to attract, reward and retain key talents," said an Ayala Corp. statement.

From the present 1 percent, Ayala Corp., subject to final shareholders' approval during this year's stockholders' meeting, plans to increase the allocation for the executive and employees stock option plan to 3 percent of the listed company's total authorized capital stock.

In addition to the company stock plan, the Ayala senior officers—the company only has 122 employees as of end-2003, 18 of whom were classified as senior management—are also entitled to another stock option allocation amounting to 2.5 percent of its profitable Ayala Land unit.

The plan may be availed of within 10 years, with the allocation depending on the "vesting percentage and vesting provisions" commensurate with the officer's rank and performance.

For instance, Ayala vice chair Fernando Zobel last year obtained a total of 3,748,364 shares through the stock option plan, at P3.09 to P4.95 a share. Ayala Corp. closed yesterday at P8.40.

Just late last month, former Energy Secretary now Ayala treasurer Delfin Lazaro acquired 3,394,077 Ayala shares, also at P3.09 to P4.95/share, under the same plan. More than 1.58 million of those shares were acquired for P3.09 each.

At Friday's closing, Lazaro's

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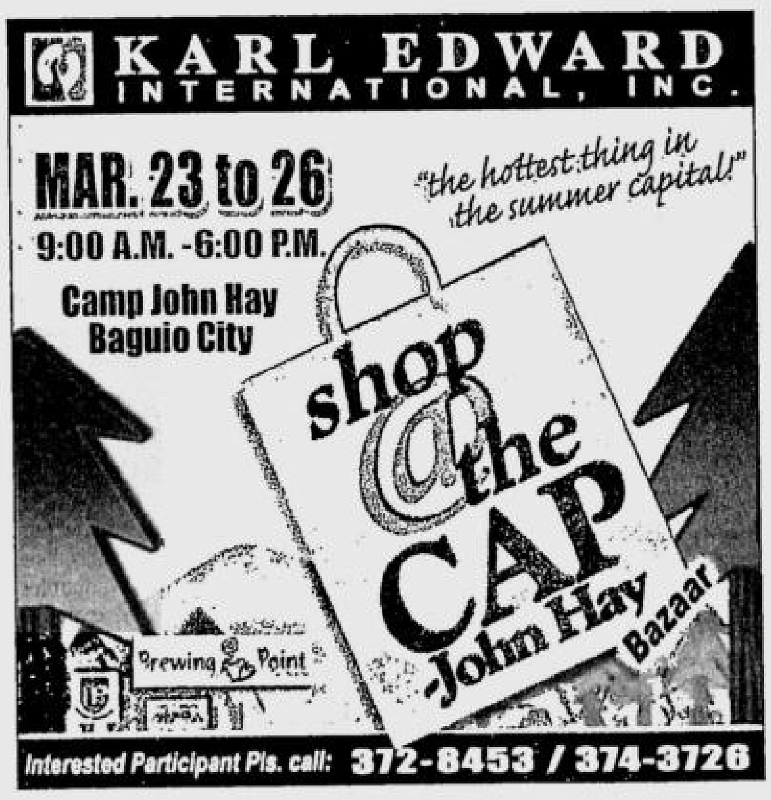

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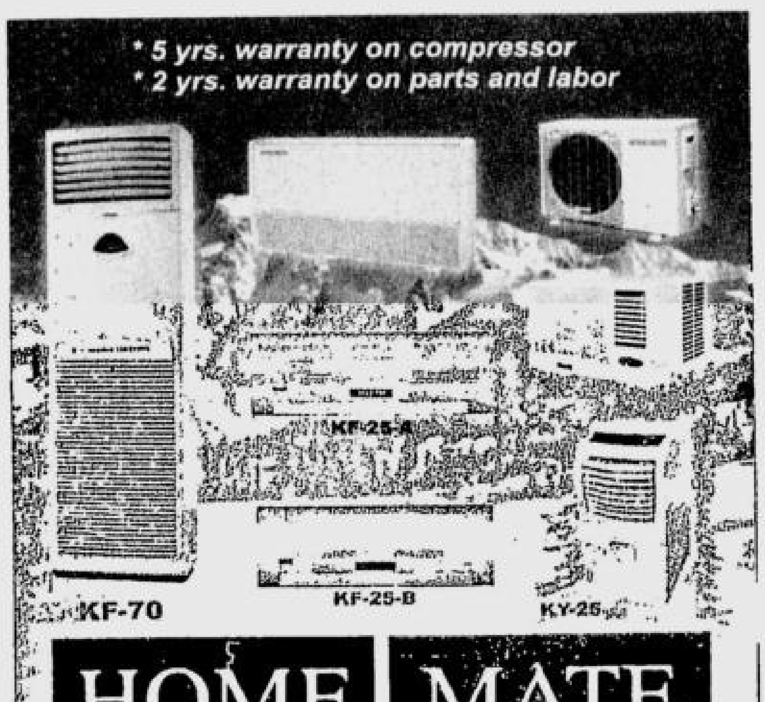

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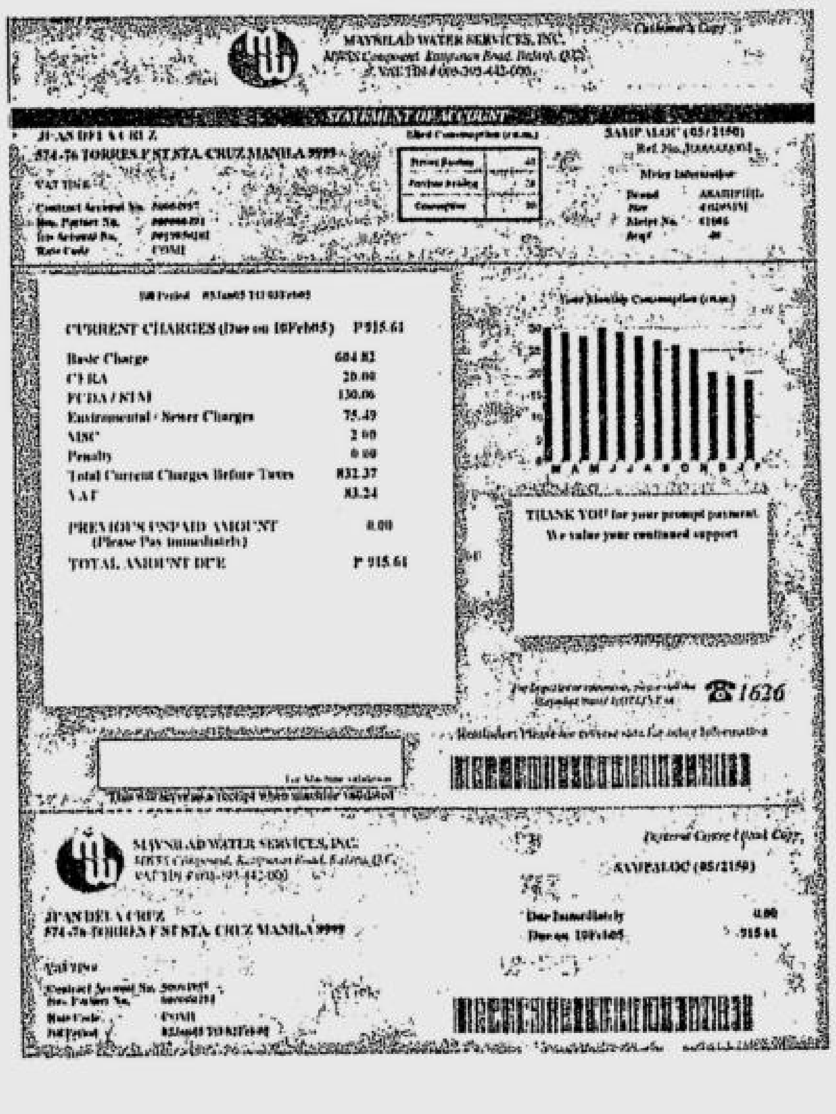

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Palawan: Key player in East Asean Growth Area

MINDANAWORLD

Joji Ilagan-Bian

FOR THE past two months, I have been receiving quite a number of mail asking me to write about the East Asean Growth Area. So what's new in Eaga ?

Many of my business colleagues would always express surprise when I tell them that it is not only Mindanao that is actively involved in the Eaga (East Asean Growth Area), but also Palawan in Luzon. Why Palawan?

I was told that as far back as the 9th century, Chinese traders were captivated by its beauty, calling it "PA-LAO-YU," which means "land of beautiful safe harbor."

But there's more to Palawan than beaches.

Palawan in Eaga

In 1994, the Brunei Darussalam Indonesia Malaysia Philippines-East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-Eaga) was officially launched under the Ramos Administration. The growth areas from the Philippines include Mindanao's Region IX (Zamboanga Peninsula), Region X (Northern Mindanao), Region XI (Davao Region), Region XII (Socsksargen), ARMM, Caraga, and Luzon's Palawan.

With this composition, many wonder why Palawan was identified as part of the BIMP-Eaga, despite being in far Luzon.

There are several reasons, all of which are paralleled with the Eaga's key mission and goal.

First, Palawan, although located in Region IV-B, is geographically affiliated to the focus areas identified for sub-regional cooperation. In fact, Palawan used to be controlled by the Sultanate of Borneo for more than two centuries because of its proximity.

Geographical proximity would allow easy cross-border investments that would lead to the spurring of economic activity among the involved regions in the Eaga.

In addition, the BIMP-Eaga cooperation was designed to restore active economic links between Mindanao, Sulu and Palawan.

This was founded on the very strong cultural and historical affinity between the three areas.

The purpose of forming sub-regional cooperation is to allow cross-border trade with neighboring countries as a means to develop the territories.

Palawan's potential to be competitive in international trading with Malaysia and Indonesia, plus its rich resources waiting to be tapped, makes its inclusion in the BIMP-Eaga logical and fitting.

The goal of the BIMP-Eaga was to increase trade, tourism, and investments in the region through the free movement of people, goods and services, the sharing of common infrastructure and natural resources, and lastly, to pursue economic complementation.

Palawan has benefited, and continues to do so, from its membership in BIMP-Eaga.

As of 1997, total Eaga investments in Mindanao and Palawan amounted to $29 million.

In strengthening the tourism sector, a travel tax exemption amounting to P1,600 and reduction of charges, were given to all Eaga-bound passengers originating from interna-

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Cocktales

From page B3

stockpile was worth over P28.5 million.

Despite the plan's generosity, still only 0.12 percent of Ayala Corp. shares, about 21.6 million, had been availed of as of December.

Dusit wins gatecrasher case

THE SUPREME Court has struck down the P400,000 in damages awarded by the Court of Appeals to character actor Amay Bisaya, who sued after the uninvited guest was asked to leave the birthday party for the general manager of the Dusit Nikko Manila Garden in 1994.

The actor, whose real name is Roberto Reyes, managed to gatecrash the penthouse party by helping a female guest, whom the actor apparently knew, carry a fruit basket gift.

The damage suit had earlier been thrown out by the Quezon City Regional Trial Court but the Court of Appeals, saying "not a few of the rich people treat the poor with contempt," awarded Bisaya, a 1992 KBL candidate for Bohol governor, P400,000 in restitution out of the P2 million he had asked for,

In reversing the appellate court, the SC's Second Division took the rare step to review even the facts of the case, and concluded that CA Justices Eugenio Labitoria, Teodoro Regino and Rebecca Guia-Salvador had relied on the uncorroborated testimony of the actor.

Ponente SC Justice Minita Chico-Nazario quoted Bisaya's testimony that he had been "close enough to kiss" the hotel executive, Ruby Lim, when the latter approached him to ask him to leave as the actor was helping himself to the buffet table.

"It is highly unlikely that she would shout at him [as the actor had alleged] from a very close distance," Chico-Nazario said.

The actor, in turn, shouted at the female executive, making a big scene as he was escorted out, because Lim, "single at 44-years-old" at the time, had, according to Bisaya, nursed "very strong bias and prejudice against [Bisaya], possibly influenced by her associates in her work at the hotel with foreign businessmen."

The SC justice frowned on the Bisaya allegation, noting that the two had never met before.

"If at all, Ms Lim is guilty of bad judgment which, if done with good intentions, cannot amount to bad faith," Chico-Nazario said, noting that even Bisaya's friend, a Dr. Violeta Filart, whom he helped carry the gift basket, had acted as if she did not know him when the commotion ensued.

Bisaya, in turn, also sued Filart, as well as the hotel and the hotel executive.

Money-go-round

- AFTER having blitzed Hong Kong, Singapore and London, the roadshow for SM Investments will this week bring SM heirs Teresita Sy and Henry Sy Jr. to New York, Boston, Washington DC, Chicago and San Francisco. The pricing and marketing strategy for the country's largest IPO offering, which could raise up to P42 billion, is being globally coordinated by Macquarie Securities, the same bookrunner behind this year's trend-setting Semirara Mining offering.
- Seattle's Best has soft-opened one of the two planned branches in the Tektite Towers, one on each ground floor, both shops being a joint venture with banker-turned-barista Arsenio Bartolome III.

Heard through the grapevine

THE LEADING players of staunch basketball rivals Ateneo and La Salle are close to forming an unlikely team to play in next month's Philippine Basketball League season.

Harbour Centre's Mikee Romero is putting together the dream team, after La Salle, whose main sponsor is ICTSI's Enrique Razon Jr., and Ateneo's Smart Addict Mobile both declined to join this season's PBL so as not to strain themselves for July's UAAP season.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@pldtdsl.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

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Gov't eyes open skies arrangement in Clark

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE ARROYO administration may adopt an open skies policy not only for cargo but also for passenger airlines at the Clark Special Economic Zone to encourage more carriers, especially the low-cost operators, to service the Central Luzon hub.

Executive Order 253, which was signed in December 2003, gave foreign cargo carriers unrestricted access to the Clark Special Economic Zone, through the Diosdado Macapagal International Airport, and the Subic Bay Freeport Zone, through the Subic Bay International Airport.

The government may expand the coverage of the EO to include passenger carriers. The order was strongly opposed by certain quarters saying it was unconstitutional and that it posed unfair competition to the local aviation industry.

The Civil Aeronautics Board's plan is to liberalize the Clark airport "but only for low-cost carriers."

This means that even without bilateral entitlements, budget foreign carriers will be allowed to land and take off from Clark once the new policy is in place.

"Requests for additional entitlements by foreign airlines are subject to air talks between two concerned countries. In the meantime, we can open Clark to low-cost carriers even in the absence of new entitlements," said CAB executive director Tomas Mañalac.

Transport Secretary Leandro Mendoza had been proposing an open skies arrangement in Clark for low-cost carriers. No-frills carriers supposedly offer rates as low as 50 percent off those charged by regular players.

He said that Malaysian budget carrier Air Asia and its subsidiary Thai Air Asia were planning to launch flights to the former US military airbase in Pampanga.

"We can make Clark the hub for low-cost carriers. We will encourage our domestic carriers to fly to Clark also," said Mendoza.

He said the Manila International Airport Authority, which had been tasked to oversee Clark airport, would spend about P2 billion to upgrade the passenger terminal in Clark.

The former US military air base sits on a 2,750-hectare complex with two parallel, 3.2-kilometer runways that can accommodate large aircraft. It has a passenger terminal building that can serve 500 passengers per hour or 1.5 million passengers yearly.

Mendoza said Clark had granted landing rights to several carriers, in the hope that they would soon mount flights to Clark. Last year, the transportation department granted 52 airlines landing rights in Clark.

The Clark airport provides carriers a 6-month exemption from payment of aeronautical fees. The transport chief said this would give carriers millions of pesos in savings.

The Arroyo administration, he said, had been trying to attract more airlines to operate in Clark to help decongest the Manila airports.

The CAB said a Singapore-based budget airline called Jetstar Asia had applied for permit to fly to Manila.

Government asked to keep restriction on meat imports

By Christine A. Gaylican

POULTRY raisers are asking the government to maintain restrictions on the importation of meat and meat products through the minimum access volume (MAV) scheme of the World Trade Organization.

The scheduled termination of the MAV system in June this year, according to the Philippine Association of Broiler Integrators Inc. (Pabi) and the National Federation of Egg Producers of the Philippines (NFEPP), will adversely affect the country's commercial, medium-scale and backyard poultry raising sectors.

Pabi president Rita Imelda Palabyab, who is also vice president for San Miguel Foods Corp.'s poultry division, said a free-for-all importation would kill the local industry.

Pabi, which is composed of large-scale broiler integrators led by San Miguel Foods Corp., San Miguel Corp., Tyson-Agro-Ventures Inc., Universal Robina Corp. and Vitarich Corp., supplies 90 percent of the country's chicken requirements, placed at about 3 million metric tons a year.

The backyard and medium-scale poultry raisers supply the remaining 10 percent of the requirement.

Palabyab said the group had filed a petition with the Department of Agriculture seeking an indefinite extension of the MAV. The department can in turn endorse the petition to the Senate committee which is reviewing the MAV scheme.

The MAV system allows a country to set specific volumes of imports and the tariffs on them thereby limiting the inflow of imported goods. Imports outside the allocated volume are slapped higher tariffs.

"In the absence of a new agreement under the GATT-WTO and the failure of recent talks, the country can unilaterally decide whether it will continue or abolish the MAV system," she explained.

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THE WIDE gap between the Filipino rich and poor—wider than in most countries in this part of the world—reveals the underlying weakness of our economy. So does our economy's persistent inability to achieve higher levels of economic growth similar to that enjoyed by our neighbors over long periods in the past.

In their paper "Beneath the Fiscal Crisis: Uneven Development Weakens the Republic," Ateneo economists and political scientists blame the thin line between economic and political power in the Philippines for our weak republic.

They propose a 10-Point Agenda for Economic Democratization to get the country out of the "development rut" where it remains stuck:

- Rectify injustices in the revenue system. Whenever higher revenues are urgently required, government's usual response is to penalize the honest taxpayers with more and higher taxes for the sins of tax evaders and corrupt revenue officials. This injustice cannot continue. BIR and Customs must be equipped, empowered and reorganized to make vast improvements in their revenue collection efficiency, for which the scope is large.

- Complete the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program soonest. Studies show that it is delays in enforcement and completion of CARP, rather than CARP itself, that have dampened farm investments. Evidence abounds that CARP beneficiaries and CARP-compliant landowners invest more in improved farm productivity. It is the CARP-pending landowners who have stopped investing in their farm lands, pulling down investments in agriculture as a whole. The solution is not to abandon CARP, but to accelerate it.

- Accelerate other asset reforms. Greater political will is required to restrict municipal waters to small artisanal fishers, distribute ancestral domain titles to indigenous groups, and redistribute more urban lands through social housing initiatives. Microfinance programs for the poor need to be scaled up nationwide. Firms should be encouraged to expand workers' participation at the factory level to reduce social conflict and improve the labor and investment climate.

- Adopt SME development as government's centerpiece program. SME development is not the responsibility of the Department of Trade and Industry alone. It must be a concerted effort involving many other government departments and agencies like DepEd, DOST, CHEd, Tesda, CDA, BSP and DILG, which also have key roles to play in making SMEs the engine of economic growth and job generation in the years ahead. Each agency concerned needs to prioritize SME development in their budgetary allocations and work programming.

- Strengthen state institutions against vested interests. Independence and objectivity of policymaking bodies and regulatory agencies must be beyond question. A coherent and comprehensive competition policy needs to be enacted, with a strong institution to enforce it (e.g., a fair trade commission built on the existing Tariff Commission). Multi-stakeholder participation and consultation must be an integral part of key governance processes.

- Sustain a broad-based campaign against corruption. It would take convincing leadership at the top, possessed with genuine commitment and zero tolerance for corruption, to take the Philippines out of the list of top corrupt countries in the world. Key to curbing corruption is improved management, interlinking and assurance of the integrity of basic records and information, such as those of the Land Registration Authority, Civil Registry, SEC, BIR, BOC and LTO, among others.

- Intensify decentralization of development. A "second wave of decentralization" is needed to move beyond the provisions of the 1991 Local Government Code, provide mechanisms for wide replication of the many recognized local best practices (e.g. Naga City, Nueva Vizcaya, Cebu City, and many others), and undertake affirmative action for the countryside in areas such .as infrastructure planning, SME development, financial market deepening, and many others.

- Guarantee the public's right to information. The public's constitutional right to public information has not been translated into legally enforceable rights. Thus, it is important that the long-pending legislation on the "Right to Public Information Act" be enacted, and regulations that restrict freedom of public expression, such as the sedition and libel provisions in the Revised Penal Code, be repealed.

- Reform the political and electoral processes toward greater inclusiveness. Long-pending bills that would provide public funding for legitimate political parties, tightly control private campaign contributions, ban political dynasties, and overhaul the electoral process need to be enacted. Reforms are needed to transform the nation's politics from one that is focused on personalities to one that is focused on principles and merit.

- Institutionalize mechanisms for "social sharing." Clearly, the fight against poverty cannot be financed from government's meager resources alone. Statistics tell us that one out of four (24.7 percent) Filipino families is poor. This also means that three out of four are not. If

NO FREE LUNCH/ B7

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of March 4, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco De Oro Univ. Bank	29.5	30	29	30	247,900
Bank of the Phil. Islands	59	59.5	59	59	283,400
China Banking Corp.	670	675	670	675	230
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	1,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	50.5	51.5	50.5	51	437,900
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	1.02	1.02	0.96	0.98	26,640,000
International Exch. Bank	18.75	18.75	18.75	18.75	13,200
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	36	36	34	36	5,698,900
Philippine National Bank	32	32.5	32	32	11,500
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	14.75	14.75	14.75	14.75	4,000
Security Bank Corp.	30	30.5	30	30	544,300
Union Bank of the Phil.	30.5	31	30.5	31	101,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	0.96	0.99	0.94	0.99	360,000
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	2.1	2.12	2.1	2.12	236,000
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	136	136	136	136	2,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1725	1730	1725	1730	310
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	17.75	17.75	17.5	17.5	52,400
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.52	1.54	1.48	1.52	7,359,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	930	945	930	945	19,440
Ipeople Inc.	4.7	4.7	4.7	4.7	65,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.0625	0.0625	0.06	0.0625	30,900,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.39	0.42	0.39	0.42	460,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.08	2.08	2.08	2.08	9,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.7	3.8	3.65	3.8	8,404,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1420	1480	1420	1465	183,870
Ivantage Corp.	0.76	0.79	0.76	0.78	2,510,000
Philweb Corp.	0.02	0.021	0.019	0.021	254,000,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	19.5	20	19.5	20	327,400
Manila Electric Co. B	31	31.5	31	31.5	1,128,400
Petron Corp.	4	4.1	4	4.05	1,833,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.46	1.46	1.42	1.44	329,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.96	1.98	1.96	1.98	20,000
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.78	1.8	1.78	1.8	99,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	8.3	8.3	8	8.3	684,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	120,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.73	0.75	0.72	0.72	5,690,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	4.2	4.3	4.2	4.25	831,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.85	3.85	3.8	3.8	349,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	36	36	36	36	2,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	29.5	30	29.5	30	21,500
Pancake House Inc.	1.26	1.34	1.26	1.34	125,000
RFM Corp.	1.12	1.12	1	1	2,505,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.42	0.42	0.4	0.42	360,000
San Miguel Corp. A	56	57	55	57	311,300
San Miguel Corp. B	78	79	78	79	79,300
Universal Robina Corp.	10.5	10.5	10	10.5	850,200
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	500,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	80,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	20,000,000
Ayala Corp.	8.3	8.4	8.2	8.4	7,603,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.64	0.69	0.64	0.69	2,940,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.7	4.95	4.7	4.9	1,021,000
Alliance Global Group Inc.	11	11	11	11	13,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.048	0.06	0.048	0.06	122,500,000
A. Soriano Corp.	2.3	2.34	2.22	2.32	6,755,000
APC Group Inc.	0.46	0.48	0.46	0.46	4,510,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	0.0085	107,000,000
Baguio Gold Holdings Corp.	1.2	1.2	1.1	1.1	31,000
Balabac Resources & Hldgs	0.87	0.88	0.87	0.87	50,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	21.75	24	21.75	23.75	146,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.225	0.235	0.225	0.235	16,400,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.3	1.36	1.3	1.34	38,491,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.225	0.225	1,000,000
Cadp Group Corp.	1.24	1.24	1.24	1.24	37,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	2,000,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.52	0.54	0.52	0.53	2,000,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	4	4.1	3.95	4.1	2,251,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.06	0.06	0.055	0.055	2,700,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	6,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	10.25	10.25	10	10.25	91,100
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	57.5	58.5	57.5	57.5	628,800
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.23	0.28	0.23	0.28	1,930,000
Global Equities Inc.	0.115	0.12	0.115	0.115	7,130,000
House Of Investments Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	290,000
Ionics Inc.	1.7	1.7	1.7	1.7	10,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.45	3.45	3.4	3.45	625,000
Marsteel Cons. Inc. B	0.019	0.02	0.019	0.02	2,500,000
Medco Holdings	0.49	0.52	0.46	0.5	2,080,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.68	1.7	1.68	1.7	4,565,000
Mabuhay Holdings Corp.	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	50,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.45	0.54	0.45	0.47	1,200,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.58	0.6	0.58	0.6	19,980,000
Polar Property Holdings	2.02	2.02	2.02	2.02	10,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	10,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.33	0.35	0.33	0.35	240,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	1.02	1.04	1.02	1.02	233,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.66	0.66	0.65	0.65	520,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	2.95	2.95	2.95	2.95	5,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.195	0.2	8,430,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.2	0.21	0.2	0.21	1,150,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.33	0.33	1,260,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	7.9	7.9	7.9	7.9	20,000
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.72	1.74	1.68	1.68	100,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	820,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.125	0.135	0.125	0.13	2,780,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1.54	1.56	1.54	1.56	8,020,000
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	9.9	10.5	9.5	10.5	10,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	1.14	1.22	1.14	1.22	2,261,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.58	1.58	1.54	1.56	3,971,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.38	0.38	0.38	0.38	540,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	17.5	17.5	17.25	17.25	414,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series J	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Z	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	9	9.5	9	9.4	16,848,000
Araneta Properties Inc.	0.41	0.51	0.41	0.51	830,000
Cityland Development Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	19,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.96	1	0.96	0.98	440,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.34	2,040,000
Cebu Prop. Vent B	0.78	0.78	0.78	0.78	10,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.33	0.34	0.33	0.33	5,870,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.3	0.3	0.27	0.29	570,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.51	0.53	0.51	0.52	15,520,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.76	1.84	1.76	1.84	4,527,000
Gotesco Land Inc.B	0.17	0.175	0.17	0.17	250,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	290,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.76	0.76	0.76	0.76	830,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	3	3.15	3	3.15	766,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.28	0.29	0.27	0.28	2,500,000
SM Development Corp.	1.84	1.88	1.82	1.82	478,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.8	9.1	8.8	9	7,111,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	1.04	1.04	1.02	1.02	270,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	1.08	1.1	1.08	1.08	120,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.012	0.012	0.012	0.012	162,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	6.5	6.5	6	6	1,121,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.4	0.41	0.4	0.4	11,500,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44	4,390,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.021	0.021	0.019	0.019	30,800,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.028	0.028	0.028	0.028	53,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.01	0.011	0.0095	0.011	1,855,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	1.16	1.16	1.14	1.16	2,470,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	1.42	1.42	1.38	1.4	1,335,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	43	43	41	42.5	1,230,100
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.3	0.3	0.3	0.3	500,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.016	0.016	0.015	0.016	21,100,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	0.0075	154,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0085	0.0085	0.008	0.008	21,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	40,000
Pacifica	0.015	0.015	0.015	0.015	18,300,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.23	0.235	0.225	0.225	10,080,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	420,000

CURRENCIES

March 4, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.762660	1.000000	54.8720
Japan	Yen	0.007248	0.009503	0.5214
United Kingdom	Pound	1.455003	1.907800	104.6848
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.097782	0.128212	7.0352
Switzerland	Franc	0.645939	0.846955	46.4741
Canada	Dollar	0.613318	0.804182	44.1271
Singapore	Dollar	0.468407	0.614175	33.7010
Australia	Dollar	0.598305	0.784498	43.0470
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.023025	2.652590	145.5529
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.203371	0.266660	14.6322
Brunei	Dollar	0.466973	0.612295	33.5979
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000082	0.000108	0.0059
Thailand	Baht	0.019835	0.026008	1.4271
UAE	Dirham	0.207651	0.272272	14.9401
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.311200	71.9482
Argentina	Peso	0.258398	0.338811	18.5912
Brazil	Real	0.283939	0.372301	20.4289
Denmark	Kroner	0.134369	0.176184	9.6676
India	Rupee	0.017500	0.022946	1.2591
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.200727	0.263193	14.4419
Mexico	New Peso	0.068658	0.090025	4.9399
New Zealand	Dollar	0.555066	0.727802	39.9360
Norway	Kroner	0.121683	0.159551	8.7549
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012855	0.016855	0.9249
South Africa	Rand	0.128416	0.168378	9.2393
Korea	Won	0.000758	0.000994	0.0545
Sweden	Kroner	0.110620	0.145045	7.9589
Syria	Pound	0.014692	0.019264	1.0571
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.024859	0.032595	1.7886
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000355	0.000466	0.0256

G & W clubshares
SEC License Broker No.: A-17587
FREE PLAYING RIGHTS AVAILABLE
As of March 7, 2005
SHARES AVAILABLE

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club B	1,150,000	-
Alta Vista A/B*	-	180,000/220,000*
Baguio Country Club	Pls. Call	-
Calatagan Golf	80,000	-
Camp John Hay	160,000	-
Canyon Woods	140,000	-
Capitol Hills	110,000	-
Cebu Country Club	Pls. Call	Pls. Call
Celebrity Sports	Pls. Call	100,000
City Sports Club Cebu	Pls. Call	-
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	225,000/290,000*/Pls. Call**	-
Eastridge A	120,000	-
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	130,000/Pls. Call	180,000*
Manila Golf Corporate	Pls. Call	11,500,000
Manila Golf Individual	Pls. Call	-
Manila Polo	Pls. Call	2,000,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	Pls. Call*	350,000/870,000*
Manila Yacht Club	-	280,000
Makati Sports Club	-	180,000
Metropolitan Club A/B*	180,000/200,000*	110,000
Mimosa C2/C3*	220,000	280,000*
Mimosa Golf Ind.	-	130,000
Mt. Malarayat A/B*	190,000	180,000/300,000*
Orchard A/B*/C**	180,000/280,000*/350,000**	-
Puerto Azul	80,000	-
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	120,000	180,000**
Rockwell Leisure Club	280,000	-
Royale Tagaytay CC	80,000	-
Sherwood A/B*/C**	70,000/110,000*/180,000**	-
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	1,300,000	-
The Palms Country Club	820,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	Pls. Call	380,000
Tagaytay Highlands	Pls. Call	-
Tagaytay Midlands	-	650,000
The Country Club	2,000,000	-
Valle Verde Ind.	120,000	-
Valley Golf	280,000	230,000
Wack Wack Golf	Pls. Call	Pls. Call

Tel. 7723246-49/8504151-52/8426731
8092038/(0917)3287789
E-mail gwclubshares@pacific.net.ph

GG & A Club Shares
SEC License Broker #007575 * As of March 7, 2005

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,150,000	1,050,000
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,200,000	-
Baguio Country Club	550,000	500,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	50,000	-
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	70,000	-
Camp John Hay	200,000	-
Canlubang	550,000	Please Call
Canyon Woods	140,000	-
Capitol Hills	100,000	-
Cebu Country Club	1,500,000	1,400,000
Celebrity Sports Club	120,000	-
Club Filipino	150,000	110,000
Eagleridge "A"	230,000	190,000
Eagleridge "B"	290,000	-
Eagleridge "C"	300,000	-
Forest Hills "A"	130,000	110,000
Forest Hills "B"	180,000	-
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	-
Makati Sports Club "A"	240,000	160,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	240,000	190,000
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	11,500,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	-	11,300,000
Manila Polo	2,150,000	2,050,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	430,000	350,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	650,000
Manila Yacht Club	300,000	250,000
Metroclub "A"	120,000	-
Mimosa (Individual)	200,000	120,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	350,000	270,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	200,000	-
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	300,000	180,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	210,000	150,000
Orchard Golf Club "C"	400,000	350,000
Quezon City Sports Club	160,000	140,000
Rockwell	280,000	-
Spa & Lodge	650,000	550,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,300,000	1,000,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,600,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	170,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	120,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	380,000	370,000
Tagaytay Highlands	800,000	750,000
Tagaytay Midlands	700,000	650,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	120,000	100,000
Valle Verde (Corporate)	200,000	-
Valley Golf	300,000	230,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	-	6,000,000

*PLAYING RIGHTS ALSO AVAILABLE

For more information, please call:
Tel.no. 840-1761 / Fax 894-3021 / Mobile 0927-8765673
or e-mail at: ggashare@mozcom.com
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YOUR TRUSTED SPECIALIST BROKER SINCE 1982•
SEC License #2115
OUR 23rd Year
BUY/SELL GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB SHARES
As of March 4, 2005

CLUB	SELLING	BUYING
Alabang Country Club "A"	-	10M
Alabang Country Club "B"	-	1.050M
Baguio Country Club	550K	-
Camp John Hay	175K	-
Canlubang Golf Club	please call	-
Canyon Woods	125K	110K
Capitol Hills "A"	100K	please call
Celebrity Sports Club	120K	-
Club Punta Fuego	450K	-
Eagleridge Golf Club "A"	300K	-
Eagleridge Golf Club "B"	290K	-
Eagleridge Golf Club "C"	280K	-
Eastridge Golf Club "A"	115K	-
Eastridge Golf Club "B"	120K	-
Makati Sports Club	190K	-
Manila Golf Club - Indv.	please call	11.3M
Manila Golf Club (Corp.)	please call	-
Manila Polo Club	-	2M
Manila Southwoods "A"	-	370K
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	700K
Orchard Golf Club "A"	200K	-
Orchard Golf Club "B"	-	300K
Philippine Columbian Assoc.	-	60K
Quezon City Sports Club	150K	-
Riviera Golf Club "A"	-	70K
Riviera Golf Club "B"	-	140K
Riviera Sports & C.C.	50K	-
Spa & Lodge	-	500K
Sta Elena Golf Club "A"	1.2M	-
Sta Elena Golf Club "B"	1.5M	-
The Country Club at TH	430K	350K
Tagaytay Midlands	-	650K
The Palms Country Club	-	520K
Valley Golf Club	230K	-
Wack Wack Golf Club	please call	please call

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Join us on Thursday, March 10, at the
Gold Quill AWARDS PHILIPPINES
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Reserve seats thru
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PR Casebook Launch
Infanta Book Presentation
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PAGCOR
CALTEX
Ayala
SAN MIGUEL CORPORATION
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VAT: The never-ending circus

QUESTIONS OF POLICIES

Honesto C. General

GOOD thing I was not at the gallery of the House of Representatives last Monday. I would have died laughing.

Our congressmen had the brilliant idea of slapping independent power producers (IPP) with the value-added tax (VAT), albeit at a reduced 4 percent. But the IPPs would be prohibited from passing on the tax to the buyer of the electricity they generate.

This is an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms that could only have been concocted by a bunch of lawmakers who had not been within a foot of the internal revenue code.

The code says that the VAT is levied on the sale of goods, properties, or services. The tax is an indirect tax, meaning, the buyer pays it to the BIR indirectly through the seller. This is the output tax. In other words, the seller is the collecting agent of BIR.

A lot of the confusion stems from the misconception that the VAT is "passed on" by the seller to the buyer. Not so. The seller collects the tax, called the output tax, from the buyer.

In due time, the seller sends the output tax to the BIR. But, from this remittance, the seller deducts the VAT he paid on his purchases that were subject to VAT. This is the input tax, a term that has also led to more confusion. Just the other day, an insurance adjuster friend of mine, bewailed the fact that he had little input tax to deduct from the output tax. I answered, "Why are you complaining? That means you did not pay for anything that had VAT on it. And, the output tax that you will remit to BIR was money you collected from your client, anyway."

What about the poor end-user or consumer? He has no input tax, people say. Under the VAT system, the end-user avoids paying double taxation, or tax on tax, which is what used to happen under the old sales tax system.

Avoiding multiple taxation is what the VAT system is all about. This needs repeating: avoiding multiple taxation is what the VAT system is all about. All congressmen should read my column of last Feb. 7.

Now back to the IPP. If the 4 percent tax is a true VAT, then the IPP does not pass it on to the consumer. The IPP collects it from the consumer of electricity, whether it is the National Power Corp., or the consumers of a franchise area, or a big factory with a direct hook-up with the IPP. Then, the constitutional prohibition on the impairment of contracts is not violated.

Sure, Napocor is exempt from all taxes. But with regards to the power generated by an IPP, Napocor merely acts as an intermediary between the IPP and, say, Meralco. So, Napocor collects from the VAT on the power Meralco distributes. In effect, Napocor does not pay any VAT. It is Meralco that does.

The exemptions to the VAT law lead to more confusion. Why should doctors and lawyers be exempted from the tax, people scream to high heaven. The doctors and lawyers are not exempted. The patients and clients are. So, what does the government want?

If the government wants to tax the patient who is confined, the hospital should be required to collect the VAT on the doctor's fees. The doctor should not be allowed to collect his fees directly from the patient. This stops the doctor from collecting without issuing a receipt. If the patient is not confined, but is a Philhealth member or has insurance, he will require a receipt from the doctor to support his claim. This will take care of the VAT on most of the doctor's fees.

The idea of exempting those with incomes of not more than P700,000 a year will be an administrative nightmare. If this pushes through, expect BIR Commissioner Parayno to quit in disgust.

With regards to the lawyers, the client usually will want a receipt because he needs to book it to support a deductible expense.

Do not even think of trying to slap the VAT on goods sold in the public markets. All a lawmaker has to do is to visit any public market to see how futile this idea is. Do you really think a fishmonger will issue receipts?

I am afraid that the Senate and the House are mangling the VAT system beyond recognition, with multiple rate and new exemptions. The simpler the system is, the better the administration, and the more the revenue.

The new VAT law should be wrapped up soon. This never-ending circus at the House and the Senate has been running for far too long. And it is no longer funny.

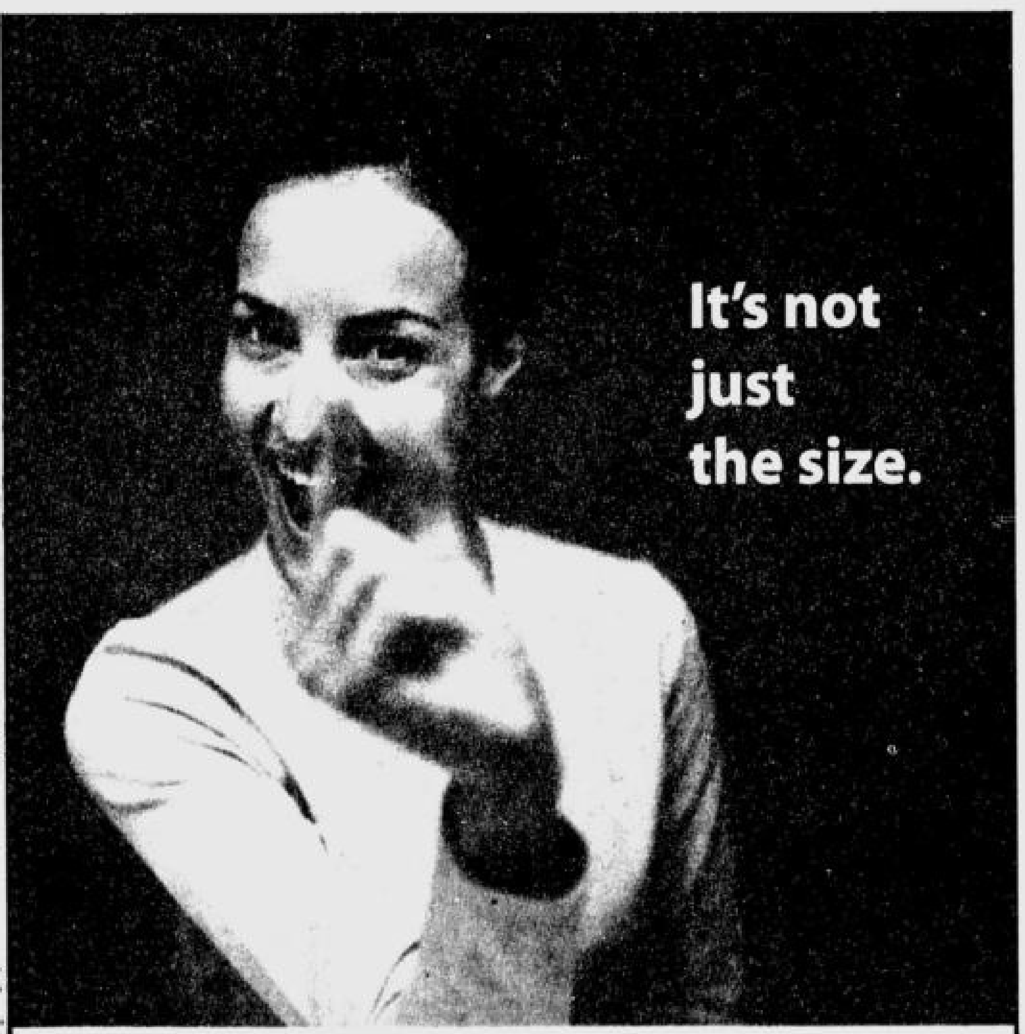
No Free Lunch

From page B6

even only one out of every three non-poor families helps nurture one poor family out of poverty, then poverty need not be inevitable in this country. The challenge is to devise effective mechanisms by which the haves can share with the have-nots, and widely mobilized so as to reach every poor family in the country. Laudable programs like the Gawad Kalinga and "Adopt A School" are worthy of being scaled up to the national level.

Without commitment to measures such as these, the Ateneo professors warn that the quest for a Strong Republic becomes nothing more than empty rhetoric.

(E-mail me at chabito@ateneo.edu for a copy of the full Ateneo paper.)



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Palawan: Key player in East Asean . . .

From page B4

tional seaports, as well as international airports, in Mindanao and Palawan from 1995 to June 2004.

Support to small businesses

In a related matter, due to the efforts of the Eaga, air transport links of Palawan were improved. Last April 2004, Layang-layang Aerospace, in partnership with South Phoenix Airways, launched its Puerto Princesa (Palawan)-Kota Kinabalu (Malaysia) air services.

In 2000, Palawan and Mindanao collectively received financial assistance from the Asian Development Bank (ADB), worth $70 million, for the economic strengthening of their small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Currently, the Palawan SMED Council, with the assistance of the ADB, are finalizing the established and formulated strategies to foster a stronger public-private sector partnership for SME Development in Philippine-Eaga.

With the Philippine-Eaga officials prioritizing the tourism and agriculture sectors of Palawan, we can surely expect great plans for Palawan in the BIMP-Eaga.

(Joji Ilagan Bian is a strong advocate for Mindanao; Member, Export Development Council and former Chair of the Mindanao Business Council. Vice Chair of the Mindanao Commission of Women and National Corn Board; Chair of the Mindanao TVET. Email comments to jojibian2@yahoo.com)

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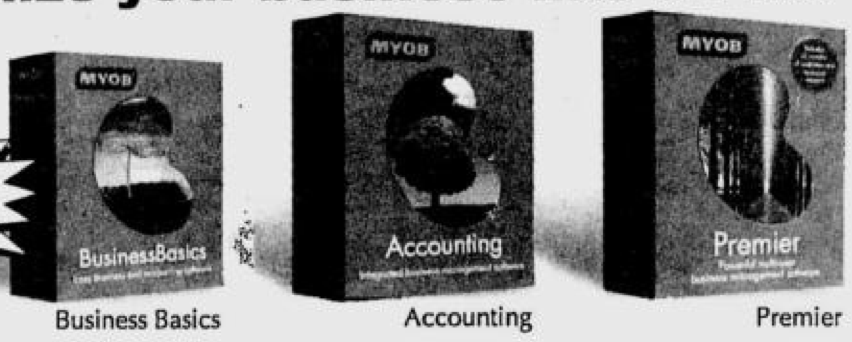

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FORUM HIGHLIGHTS*

Afternoon Session
(Start: 1:30pm End: 4:30pm)
1. Lito Tanjuatco, President - DLSAA
2. Br. Armin A. Luistro, FSC President - DLSU
3. Rene J. Buenaventura, CEO - Equitable PCIB
4. Ramon Isberto, Head Public Affairs - Smart
5. Juan Miguel del Rosario, VP HR - Unit. Pulp and Paper Co. Inc.
6. Franz Pumaren, Basketball Coach - DLSU

Evening Session
(Start: 5:00 pm End: 8:00 pm)
1. Dr. Carmelita I. Quebengco, EVP - DLSU
2. Franco del Rosario, CEO - 6Sigma Consulting
3. James Natti, CEO Ayala ADN
4. Gerard Sanvictores, SGV Partner
5. Boy Martinez, Head Per. Comm. & Mob. Services Smart

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*We welcome La Salle alumni interested to be speakers in future career forums. Please e-mail or fax your bio-data to the above contact information.

CONSTRUCTION SECTOR

RP, Japan move to forge stronger bilateral ties

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINES and Japan are taking steps to strengthen cooperation in the construction industry as joint venture projects among private firms from the two countries reached P6.6 billion in value in 2004.At the same time, the Department of Trade and Industry said the local construction industry's exports to Japan grew 7.9 percent to $1891 million in 2004 from $175.3 million in 2003.

The growth was attributed to the local industry's competitive advantage in the areas of price and quality, environment-friendly operations, customer orientation, sales and delivery and post-sales service commitments.

One of the efforts to encourage further growth was the holding last week of the two-day Japan-Philippines Conference on the Construction Industry at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel.

The forum gathered representatives from the Philippine Constructors Association and the Overseas Construction Association of Japan. Among the topics discussed were issues related to the rising demand for public works and private construction in the two countries.

Trade Secretary Juan B. Santos said the conference provided local construction companies and construction service firms to meet their Japanese counterparts and promote their services to possible partners.

Santos said the forum was one of the results of the bilateral talks on the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement which, reports said, was expected to be finalized within this year.

In November 2004, Manila and Tokyo agreed in principle to ratify the JPEPA.

"Recent JPEPA negotiations brought to the fore the need for a comprehensive understanding of the two countries' growing collaboration in the area of construction and infrastructure development," he said.

The official added that last year's joint ventures between local and Japanese firms involved six projects. "The business volume is expected to increase further with the signing of the JPEPA."

JPEPA seeks to promote freer flow of goods, persons and services, and capital between the two countries.

BSP wants IMF . . .

From page B1

withdraw anyway. They (IMF) themselves can withdraw the arrangement if they see that there is no more need for it," Buenaventura said.

The Philippines had 20 different financing programs with the Fund. Although the country is now a net depositor to the IMF, an improvement from being a net creditor until 2001, government economic managers believe the PPM is still crucial in validating the soundness of the government's economic program.

Being a net depositor means the country's outstanding debt to the Fund is now below it's contribution as a shareholder.

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PLEASANT VILLAGE, MUNTINLUPA
HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 405 sqm. F.A. 476 sqm.
Pleasant Village, Putatan
Min. Bid Price P 5,000,000

SUNSET VIEW, PASAY
RSDL. CONDO
F.A. 129.95
Sunset View Condo, Roxas Blvd.
Min. Bid Price P 4,500,000

QUEZON CITY
2-STRY HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 100 sqm. F.A. 191 sqm.
Villa Orion Subd., Fairview
Min Bid Price P 4,200,000

2-STRY HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 150 sqm. F.A. 270 sqm.
C. Francisco St.,
North Susana Village
Min Bid Price P 4,000,000

COMM'L LOT
L.A. 4,141 sqm.
In front of Residenza Subd.,
Camarin
Min Bid Price P 30,387,000

COMM'L LOT
L.A. 3,434 sqm
In front of Residenza Subd.,
Camarin
Min. Bid Price P 24,038,000

LITTLE BAGUIO, SAN JUAN
4-STRY TWNHOUSE
L.A. 62 sqm. F.A. 187.5
#74 Jose Abad Santos,
Little Baguio
Min. Bid Price P 5,600,000

MEYCAUAYAN, BULACAN
INDL LOT
L.A. 3,335 sqm.
Meycauayan Ind'l Subd
Min. Bid Price P 9,340,000

IND'L LOT
L.A. 2,379 sqm.
Meycauayan Ind'l Subd.
Min. Bid Price P 6,660,000

BALIUAG, BULACAN
POULTRY FARM
L.A. 21,532 sqm. L.A. 1,114 sqm.
Matag Tibag, Baliuag
Min. Bid Price P 3,170,000

SAN IDELFONSO, BULACAN
POULTRY FARM
L.A. 68,230 sqm. F.A. 648 sqm.
San Idelfonso
Min. Bid Price P 5,120,000

BACOOR, CAVITE
11 TWNHOUSE UNITS
L.A. 41 sqm. F.A. 70 sqm
per unit
Gold Rich Villas, Bacoor
Min. Bid Price P 6,600,000

SANTIAGO, ISABELA
4-STRY HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 531 sqm.
Panganiban Street, Santiago City
Min. Bid Price P 18,000,000

4-STRY RSDL BLDG
L.A. 11,277 sqm. F.A. 1360
Malapat, Cordon, Santiago City
Min. Bid Price P 23,550,000

CANDELARIA, QUEZON
Poultry Farm
L.A. 80,000 sqm.
Brgy. Masalukot 2, Candelaria
Min. Bid Price P 6,400,000

CALOOCAN

ATB01 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 120 sqm. F.A. 192 sqm.
Vista Verde Exec. Vill.
Min. Bid Price P 1,400,000

MAKATI

ATB03 - COMM'L CONDO.
F.A. 34.79 sqm
Citiland, De la Rosa
Min. Bid Price P 900,000

ATB04 - COMM'L CONDO.
F.A. 27.29 sqm.
Citiland, De la Rosa
Min. Bid Price P 900,000

ATB106 - TWNHOUSE UNIT
L.A. 210.79 sqm.
Makati Prime City
Min. Bid Price P 7,500,000

MANILA

ATB06 - RSDL. CONDO.
F.A. 44.63 sqm.
Burgundy Westbay Tower, Malate
Min. Bid Price P 2,500,000

ORTIGAS AVENUE

ATB02 - RSDL. CONDO.
F.A. 97.59 sqm
Unit 609 Pacific Royale Condo
Min. Bid Price P 2,100,000

PARANAQUE

ATB105- TWNHOUSE UNIT
L.A. 88.10 sqm. F.A. 76.50 sqm
San Valley, Paranaque City
Min. Bid Price P 2,000,000

PASAY

ATB09 - RSDL. CONDO.
F.A. 26.19 sqm.
Park Avenue Mansion, Park Ave
Min. Bid Price P 730,000

QUEZON CITY

ATB12 - COMM'L LOT
L.A. 3,434 sqm
In front of Residenza Subd.
Camarin
Min. Bid Price P 24,038,000

ATB15 - 2-STRY TWNHOUSE
L.A. 70 sqm. F.A. 90 sqm.
Villa Verde Subd., Novaliches
Min. Bid Price P 950,000

ATB17 - 2-STRY TWNHOUSE
L.A. 35 sqm. F.A. 58.8 per unit
West Classic Garden, Fairview
Min. Bid Price P 1,100,000

ATB95- RSDL. CONDO
F.A. 90.52 sqm
Unit 12E- Atherton Bldg.
Min. Bid Price P CALL US

ATB96- RSDL. CONDO
F.A. 97.51 sqm.
Unit 8D- Atherton Bldg.
Min. Bid Price P CALL US

ATB97- HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 37 sqm. F.A. 51.48 sqm
Roque Comp. Verdant Hills
Tandang Sora, Quezon City
Min. Bid Price P 550,000

LITTLE BAGUIO, SAN JUAN

ATB18 - 4-STRY TWNHOUSE
L.A. 62 sqm. F.A. 187.5
#74 Jose Abad Santos, Little Baguio
Min. Bid Price P 5,600,000

MANDALUYONG

ATB98- TOWNHOMES
L.A. 26 sqm.
CENTENNIAL TOWNHOMES
#310 Manimbao St., Villanca Comp.,
Min. Bid Price P 650,000

ANTIPOLO, RIZAL

ATB19 - RSDL LOT
L.A. 1,000 sqm.
Near Hinulugan Taktak
Min Bid Price P 980,000

ATB20 - 1-STRY HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 35 sqm. F.A. 24.75 sqm.
L3 B5 Louisville Subd., Brgy. Cupang
Min. Bid Price P 220,000

ATB22 - 1-STRY HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 41.28 sqm. F.A. 30.75 sqm
L7 B2 Louisville Vill.
Min. Bid Price P 300,000

ATB23 - VACANT LOT
L.A. 237 sqm
ABBA Homes Subd.
Min. Bid Price P 400,000

ATB24 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 299 sqm F.A. 111 sqm.
#7 Sto. Rosario St., Milagros Subd.
Min. Bid Price P 1,300,000

ATB25 - 9 RSDL LOTS
L.A. 1,784 sqm.
Sto. Rosario St., Milagros Subd
Min. Bid Price P 3,368,000

ATB25C - RSDL LOT
L.A. 353 sqm.
Sto. Rosario St., Milagros Subd
Min. Bid Price P 706,000

ATB26A - RSDL LOT
L.A. 1,500 sqm.
Golden Hills Subd.
Min. Bid Price P 1,090,900

ATB26B - RSDL LOT
L.A. 1,400 sqm.
Golden Hills Subd.
Min. Bid Price P 1,018,200

ATB27 - BUNGALOW HOUSE
L.A. 96 sqm. F.A. 85 sqm.
Brgy. Mambugan, Antipolo
Min Bid Price P 621,000

ATB29 - ROWHOUSE
L.A. 35 sqm. F.A. 24 sqm.
L15 B1 Louisville Subd.
Min. Bid Price P 211,000

ATB30 - ROWHOUSE
L.A. 35 sqm. F.A. 28 sqm.
L12 B 2 Louisville Subd.
Min. Bid Price P 318,000

ATB31 - ROWHOUSE
L.A. 70 sqm. F.A. 56
16 B9 Louisville Subd.
Min. Bid Price P 264,000

ATB32 - ROWHOUSE
L.A. 70 sqm. F.A. 56 sqm.
18 B9 Louisville Subd.
Min. Bid Price P 261,000

ATB93 -HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 92.75 sqm. F.A. 33 sqm.
Brentwood Subdivision
Min Bid Price P 140,000

ATB107- 2 STRY HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 300 sqm F.A. 410 sqm
Lot 888, Macapagal, Nayon Silangan
Min. Bid Price P 3,319,000

CAINTA,TAYTAY, SAN MATEO, RIZAL

ATB33 - RSDL LOT
L.A. 204 sqm.
Village East Binangonan Rizal
Min. Bid Price P 310,000

ATB34 - ROWHOUSE
L.A. 89.5 sqm. F.A.48 sqm.
Lamar Village, San Mateo, Rizal
Min. Bid Price P 645,000

ATB35 - 2-STRY HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 150 sqm. F.A. 92 sqm.
Vista Verde Subd., Cainta
Min. Bid Price P 1,054,000

ATB99- HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 122 sqm. F.A 122 sqm
St. Ignatius Lamar Village,
Gitnang Bayan
Min. Bid Price P 660,000

BAGUIO

ATB37A - RSDL. LOT
L.A. 666 sqm.
Montecarlos Village, Itogon
Min. Bid Price P 1,128,100

ATB37B - RSDL. LOT
L.A. 418 sqm.
Montecarlos Village, Itogon
Min. Bid Price P 706,000

BATANGAS

ATB38 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 237 sqm F.A. 118.85 sqm
#279 Darasa Highway
Min. Bid Price P 800,000

ATB39 - RSDL. LOT
L.A. 230 sqm
Calumala Subdivision, Bauan
Min. Bid Price P 150,000

ATB40 - 2-STRY HOUSE & LOT/6 RSDL LOT
L.A. 203 sqm.
Batangas City
Min. Bid Price P 8,500,000

ATB41 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 159 sqm. F.A 40 sqm.
Greenvalley Subd., Poblacion
San Pascual
Min. Bid Price P 398,700

ATB42 - RSDL LOT
L.A. 138 sqm.
Greenvalley Subd. Poblacion.
San Pascual
Min. Bid Price P 179,400

ATB43 - RSDL LOT
L.A. 142 sqm.
Greenvalley Subd. Poblacion,
San Pascual
Min. Bid Price P 213,000

ATB44 - RSDL. LOT
L.A. 598 sqm.
Brgy. Bolbok, Batangas City
Min. Bid Price P 598,000

ATB45 - RSDL. LOT
L.A. 312 sqm.
Golden Country Homes, Alangilan
Min. Bid Price P 998,400

ATB46 - RSDL LOT
L.A. 267 sqm
Sta. Maria St., Barrio Sambat Balite
Min. Bid Price P 1,068,000

ATB47 - RSDL LOT
L.A. 203 sqm.
De Joya St. Barrio Cuta
Min. Bid Price P 812,000

ATB48 - RSDL LOT
L.A. 353 sqm.
Sto. Niño Village, Bo. Libjo
Min. Bid Price P 1,059,000

BULACAN

ATB51 - WAREHOUSE
L.A. 305 sqm. F.A. 376 sqm.
190 Gil Carlos St., Baliuag
Min. Bid Price P 1,000,000

ATB52 - 3-STRY RSDL. BLDG.
L.A. 250 sqm. F.A. 101.75 sqm
Gen. Padilla St., Plaridel
Min. Bid Price P 900,000

CAVITE

ATB55 - SCHOOL BLDG.
L.A. 141 sqm.
Perma Homes, Alapan
Min. Bid Price P 2,500,000

ATB56 - 2-STRY HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 60 sqm. F.A. 52.75sqm.
San Rafael Exec. Villa, Bacoor
Min. Bid Price P 900,000

ATB57 - 2-STRY HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 60 sqm. F.A. 53.38 sqm.
San Rafael Exec. Villa, Bacoor
Min. Bid Price P 800,000

ATB58A -Townhouse Unit
L.A. 41 sqm. F.A. 70 sqm.
Gold Rich Villas, Bacoor
Min. Bid Price P 750,000

ATB59 - RSDL LOT
L.A. 150 sqm.
South Plains Exec. Vill., Dasma
Min. Bid Price P 375,000

ATB60 - RSDL LOT
L.A. 150 sqm.
Metropoli Green, Gen. Trias
Min. Bid Price P 310,000

ATB61 - RESORT GOLF LOTS
L.A. 437 sqm.
Eagleridge Subdivision, Gen. Trias
Min. Bid Price P 1,211,00

ATB62 - RESORT GOLF LOT
L.A. 610 sqm.
Eagleridge Subdivision, Gen. Trias
Min. Bid Price P 1,854,000

ATB63 - RESORT GOLF LOT
L.A. 570 sqm.
Manila Southwoods, Carmona
Min. Bid Price P 2,280,000

ATB64 - RESORT GOLF LOT
L.A. 439 sqm
Manila Southwoods, Carmona
Min. Bid Price P 1,756,000

ATB65 - RSDL LOT
L.A. 375 sqm
Manila Southwoods, Carmona
Min. Bid Price P 1,500,000

ATB66 - ROWHOUSE
L.A. 40 sqm. F.A.26.6 sqm.
Mary Cris Homes, Alapan, Imus
Min. Bid Price P 228,000

ATB68 - ROWHOUSE
L.A. 36 sqm. F.A.26.6 sqm.
Mary Cris Homes, Imus
Min. Bid Price P 205,000

CEBU

ATB69 - RSDL. CONDO
TRINITY PLAZA, Gorordo Avenue
F.A. 32.30 Min. Bid P 901,400
F.A. 33.97 Min. Bid P 951,160
F.A. 53.05 Min. Bid P 1,485,40

ISABELA

ATB70 - 4-STRY RSDL BLDG
L.A. 11,277 sqm. F.A. 1,360
Malapat, Cordon, Santiago City
Min. Bid Price P 23,530,000

ATB71 - AGRI LAND
L.A. 12,687 sqm.
Maharlika Hway, Batal, Santiago City
Min. Bid Price P 1,527,000

ATB73 - AGRI LOT
L.A. 15,533 sqm.
Brgy. Arabiat, Echague
Min. Bid Price P 932,000

ATB74 - AGRI LOT
L.A. 11,250 sqm.
Bo. Quezon, San Isidro
Min. Bid Price P 765,000

ATB75 - AGRI LOT
L.A. 850 sqm
Bo. Ramon, San Isidro
Min. Bid Price P 204,000

ATB77 - 2 RSDL LOTS
L.A. 3,806 sqm.
Maharlika H-way, Simayon
Min. Bid Price P 1,600,000

ATB78 - 2 RSDL LOTS
L.A. 15,760 sqm.
San Mateo H-way, San Mateo
Min. Bid Price P 2,154,000

ATB80 - COMM'L LOT
L.A. 853 sqm.
City Road, Santiago City
Min. Bid Price P 8,000,000

ATB81 - 4 RSDL LOTS
L.A. 3,164 sqm.
Patul Road, Santiago City
Min. Bid Price P 1,519,000

ATB82 - RSDL LOT
L.A. 100 sqm.
Bang Bang Road, Rosario
Min. Bid Price P 192,000

ATB83 - RSDL LOT
L.A. 300 sqm.
Alvarez, Plaridel
Min. Bid Price P 240,000

ATB84 - 3 RSDL LOTS
L.A. 906 sqm.
Alicia San Mateo Road, Alicia
Min. Bid Price P 2,180,000

ATB85 - RSDL LOT
L.A. 3,299 sqm.
Purok Bangag, Alicia
Min. Bid Price P 1,319,000

ATB86 - RSDL LOT
L.A. 1,740 sqm.
Venezia Street, Cordon, Santiago City
Min. Bid Price P 1,600,000

ATB101- PIGGERY FARM
L.A. 26,600 sqm. F.A. 2,329
Basuras, Santiago City
Min. Bid Price P 7,068,560

ATB102- 3 RSDL. LOT
L.A. 6,000 sqm.
San Manuel, Isabela
Min. Bid Price P 1,000,000

ATB103- RSDL. LOT
L.A. 316 sqm.
Barrio Plaridel, Santiago City
Min. Bid Price P 200,000

ATB104- RSDL LOT
L.A. 3,360 sqm.
Barrio Patul, Santiago City
Min. Bid Price P 1,600,000

STA. ROSA, LAGUNA

ATB87 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 163 sqm. F.A. 45 sqm.
L15B16 Gumamela St., San Jose Village II, Phase 5, Sta. Rosa, Laguna
Min. Bid Price P 950,000

ATB88 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 134 sqm. F.A. 45 sqm.
L14B17 Gumamela St. San Jose Village II, Phase 5, St. Rosa, Laguna
Min. Bid Price P 850,000

LAGUNA

ATB89 - RSDL. LOT
L.A. 300 sqm.
Las Villas De Manila, Biñan
Min. Bid Price P 1,500,000

ATB90 - 1-STRY WAREHOUSE
L.A. 262 sqm. F.A. 241 sqm.
Brgy. San Isidro, Calauan
Min. Bid Price P 960,000

TAGAYTAY

ATB94 - RSDL. LOT
L.A. 647 sqm
Pacific Heights Subd., Calaca
Min. Bid Price P 3,882,000

TARLAC

ATB92 - RSDL LOT
L.A. 2,553 sqm
#14 Sta. Arline H-way, Moncada
Min. Bid Price P 500,000

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NEW MOON AUCTIONEERS

EXCELLENCE IN FRANCHISING
Trade and Industry Secretary Juan Santos and Philippine Franchise Association chair Samie Lim led trade officials and PFA officers in honoring the winners of the recently-concluded Franchise Excellence Awards (FEA) 2004.

In his speech, Santos noted the winners' contributions to the economy and to the improvement of the Filipinos' quality of life. Twenty-two companies and individuals were honored during the event.

Increased selling seen . . .

From page B1

IPO. SM Investment's IPO was touted as the biggest since Petron Corp., according to PSE officials.

Other big companies keen on holding IPOs this year are power producer Mirant Philippines, broadcasting company GMA Network Inc. and First Generation, among others.

In the meantime, online broker 2Trade Asia.com said in its daily report that the monetary authorities' inclination to keep key rates unchanged might rekindle bargain hunting for stocks.

"We continue to see funds flowing in favor of Asian bourses this year, as developed markets plateau from their recent run. It might be high time to look into commodity-related shares and mining stocks following crude prices' recent ascending trend," it said in its report.

It added that the market's immediate support is at around 2,080 and its resistance between 2,120 and 2,130. *Elizabeth L. Sanchez*

Shipbuilding: Sailing back . . .

From page B1

vide short-distance transportation services for passengers, and outriggers for fishermen.

There are several local shipyards capable of building steel-hulled vessels, but the domestic demand is limited to small steel-hulled vessels such as barges, tugboats and fishing vessels.

Two companies based in Cebu—Tsuneishi Heavy Industries Inc, and FBMA Babcock Marine Inc.—are successful shipbuilders catering to the export market.

Tsuneishi builds bulk carriers, while the FBMA builds high-speed catamarans. Both are joint venture companies, where the foreign partners provide the technology, experience and access to the global market, while the local partners provide the land, skilled labor and local market access.

Most of the shipbuilding firms in the country are engaged in ship repair, servicing the second hand fleet where they make good returns.

These include firms such as: Keppel Philippines Inc., with shipyards in Batangas and Cebu; Subic Shipyard & Engineering Inc. located in Zambales, and Philippine Iron Construction & Marine Works Inc. in Northern Mindanao.

Largest in the world

South Korea, which has the largest shipbuilding industry in the world, has captured 56.2 percent of the world's new orders for ships.

Its order books for the next two years are full. Japan trails Korea by half at 26.6 percent; and Europe is a poor third at 11.3 percent.

The Philippine picture could change, though, as a few good men work quietly in their government offices to try to make the shipbuilding dream happen.

The lone Philippine delegate to the shipbuilding conferences, organized by the Organization for Economic Development and Cooperation Special Negotiating Group (OECD-SNG), was Agustin Bengzon, an undersecretary of the Department of Transportation and Communication.

Bengzon attended the conferences to learn how other countries developed their shipbuilding industry.

Special niche

The Philippines, Bengzon learned, could carve out its own market niche in the shipbuilding industry. Also, he found out that European shipyards enjoyed generous grants, government support measures and subsidies.

Our special niche, focusing on building small ships of 5,000 deadweight tons or less, could fly with the government setting policy directions and providing a favorable investment climate.

Bengzon announced the good news at the BIMP-Eaga (or the Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines—East Asean Growth Area) Philippine Exhibition and Conference.

He also discussed shipbuilding opportunities for the region.

In a memo to his boss, Secretary Leandro Mendoza, Bengzon noted that the Philippines needed to craft a policy and an action program to upgrade the country's shipbuilding industry.

Policy paper

Mendoza then directed Bengzon to prioritize the development of the local shipbuilding industry and tasked him to oversee the formulation of a policy paper and action program.

Mendoza's decision was recognized by President Macapagal-Arroyo in her 10-point agenda. The President encouraged the "growth of the national shipbuilding's industry" as a specific project for job and wealth creation.

Bengzon and Vicente T. Suazo Jr., Maritime Industry Authority (Marina) administrator, have started conducting dialogues with shipbuilding companies in the NCR, Iloilo, Cebu and Cagayan de Oro.

The dialogues provided a forum for the comprehensive exchange of ideas—to produce a viable action program.

Bengzon said that recent events have contributed to the development of Philippine shipbuilding.

The existing domestic demand for ships, the availability of local funds, and our shipbuilding capability are determining the shape of the shipbuilding industry, he said.

Huge demand

There is a demand for the following type of vessels:

- Roll-On/Roll-Off vessels. Ninety-six are needed for the 48 identified routes along the Ro-Ro Terminal System. The Roll-On/Roll-Off Terminal System is a component of the Development Bank of the Philippines' Sustainable Logistics Development Program (RRTS-SLDP). The SLDP is a collaboration between government and the private sector to bring about cost-effective ways of moving goods and people.
- Vessels of various types. At least 120 are needed. The vessels are part of the Philippine Navy's 15-year acquisition program.
- Multi-role response vessels. Around 311, ranging in size from 15 to 125 meters and other types of vessels. The vessels will be acquired by the Philippine Coast Guard over a 15-year period.

Allocation

Also, there is a demand for aging domestic merchant and deep sea fishing fleets, where 57 vessels may be over 30 years old and 128 vessels may be up to 26 years old.

To pay for all this, Bengzon cited the DBP allocation of P12 billion for the procurement of Ro-Ro vessels under the RRTS-SLDP.

The DBP, in collaboration with the National Development Corp. has also established the NDC-Maritime Equity Corp., a ship financing facility.

"I commend DBP chair Vitaliano Nañagas II and former Department of Trade and Industry Secretary Cesar Purisima for recognizing the need to establish a ship financing and leasing facility jointly with the NDC to address the financing requirements needed to support the shipbuilding program," Bengzon said.

Given the number of ships to be built and the magnitude of the funding required, more than one financing and leasing firm may be needed to cater to both the public and the private sectors' requirements, he said.

Investors for this new ship financing and leasing company could also come from financial institutions, insurance and fund-management groups, and venture capitalists. *(To be continued)*

Economists see moderate growth in US economy

WASHINGTON— The US economy showed signs of revving higher in February, generating 262,000 new jobs, the Labor Department said Friday in a report suggesting a self-sustaining but still-modest expansion.

The report on job growth, a key to maintaining economic growth, was much better than the 225,000 new jobs predicted, on average, by private economists.

But a separate survey in the report showed the jobless rate increased to 5.4 percent from 5.2 percent. The apparent contradiction is explained by an increase in the number of active job seekers.

Payrolls have increased an average of 183,000 in the past three months. The agency revised the January report to show payroll growth of 132,000 instead of 146,00, and the December report to 155,000 from 148,000.

Analysts said the report was solid but must be taken in context with relatively lackluster job growth in recent months.

"It was a very good number but you have to look at the trend of 183,000 per month," said Scott Brown, chief economist at Raymond James and Associates.

Brown said the report was "not as bad as feared" for the bond market, because it means a moderate pace of expansion that will allow the Federal Reserve to stay on its path of gradual interest rate increases.

The report suggests a "self-sustaining" pace of expansion, Brown said, but added "there is still a lot of slack in the labor market," evidenced by the shift in the number of job market entrants.

John Lonski at Moodys Investors Service said the increase in the unemployment rate should not be a source of concern.

Analysts said it was too soon to say the trend was accelerating, and noted that the lack of wage growth or hours worked suggest some softness in the labor market.

Manufacturing industries added 20,000 new jobs in February, with much of the gain coming from auto workers returning from temporary layoffs, the government said.

Construction industries added 30,000 jobs. Service producing jobs grew by 207,000, with the bulk of the new jobs coming in professional and business services.

The report should give more confidence to Federal Reserve officials that the economy is on a self-sustaining expansion. But the softness in some areas of the report may keep the central bank from moving too quickly on rates. *AFP*

Wall St. to track oil, tech and trade data

NEW YORK—A stronger-than-expected February jobs report may carry over and give a shot in the arm to the US stock market early this week, but stubbornly high oil prices are likely to remain a spoiler.

Crude oil, which hit $53.78 a barrel on Friday, is fast approaching the record high of $55.67 reached in October.

Wall Street also will get a pulse reading from two tech bellwethers and international trade deficit data this week.

Center stage, though, belongs to oil.

The surge in the price of oil has underscored concerns about inflation and fears that higher energy costs will pinch corporate profits and hit consumers in the wallet.

But oil worries temporarily took a back seat to the robust jobs figure on Friday, which helped fuel a market rally.

The jobs figure proved to be good news for stocks, said Bill Strazzullo, chief market strategist at State Street Global Markets.

"Stocks kind of want the Goldilocks thing. They want to see strength, but they don't want to see too much strength where you get an accelerated pace of (Fed) tightening," he said.

On Friday, the blue-chip Dow Jones industrial average soared to 10,940.55, its highest level since June 2001, putting it back in sight of the psychologically important 11,000 mark.

The broad Standard & Poor's 500 Index finished at 1,222.12, its highest close since July 2001.

For the week, the Dow was up 0.91 percent, the S&P 500 rose 0.89 percent, and the Nasdaq was up 0.25 percent.

With the quarterly earnings season coming to a close, the corporate news menu is light with updates from two technology powerhouses highlighting the week.

Analysts expect few surprises from Texas Instruments Inc., the world's largest maker of chips for cell phones, when it gives its mid-quarter report on Monday, with many forecasting the company will simply tighten its existing range of estimates, with a small chance for upside.

Intel Corp., the world's largest chipmaker, will update its first-quarter financial targets on Thursday, although the company's chief financial officer recently said that the first two months of the quarter made him very comfortable with the company's estimates.

Among the companies left to report earnings are hospital operator Tenet Healthcare Corp. and top US grocer Kroger Co., which both report results on Tuesday.

S&P 500 companies' profit growth so far in the quarter is about 20.3 percent, a percentage largely expected by analysts.

As of Friday, with nearly all S&P 500 companies reporting, 67 percent have beaten analysts' estimates, while 19 percent missed forecasts, according to Reuters Estimates.

By comparison, at the same time last year, 67 percent beat analysts' forecasts and 14 percent missed.

"The jobs figures are definitely a positive. On top of that, corporate profits look good. But in the near term, the word is 'oil,'" said John Cunningham, chief investment officer at J&W Seligman.

Reuters

China targets economic growth of 8% in 2005

BEIJING—China is aiming for 8 percent economic growth in 2005 and will promote robust export increases while maintaining controversial currency controls, Premier Wen Jiabao said Saturday.

The growth target, announced by Wen in a speech to China's legislature, marks a renewed effort to slow economic expansion from 2004's torrid 9.5 percent—China's fastest growth in eight years.

"The economy should grow rapidly, but not be allowed to overheat," Wen said in the nationally televised speech to members of the National People's Congress in the Great Hall of the People.

Foreign trade is expected to grow by 15 percent this year, the official Xinhua News Agency reported, citing a draft plan for economic and social development to be delivered at the congress.

It said imports and exports would be about equal, giving China a trade surplus close to zero.

Wen said the exchange rate of China's currency, the yuan, would remain "basically stable," apparently ruling out sweeping moves to meet demands by the United States and other trading partners to raise its value and ease exchange controls.

China's trading partners complain that Beijing's policy of fixing the yuan at a rate of 8.28 to the US dollar gives Chinese exporters an unfair price advantage.

Chinese leaders say they plan eventually to let the yuan trade freely on world markets. But they say that doing so now would damage China's weak banks and cause economic turmoil.

Wen said Beijing will "push forward the reform of the exchange rate determination mechanism step by step"—echoing comments by other officials who have refused to set a timetable for reform.

China's economy ballooned in 2004 despite efforts to avert inflation by putting many projects on hold and reining in lending.

The government says the economy should grow at an annual rate of 8 percent over the next five years, driven by abundant labor and its enormous domestic market.

Despite high growth, China still faces problems from unemployment, gaps in income between city and countryside, social welfare burdens and a large population of migrant laborers.

Wen said China would create 9 million new jobs while holding urban unemployment to 4.6 percent, a major concern in cities where millions have lost jobs due to the closure of decrepit state industries. *AP*

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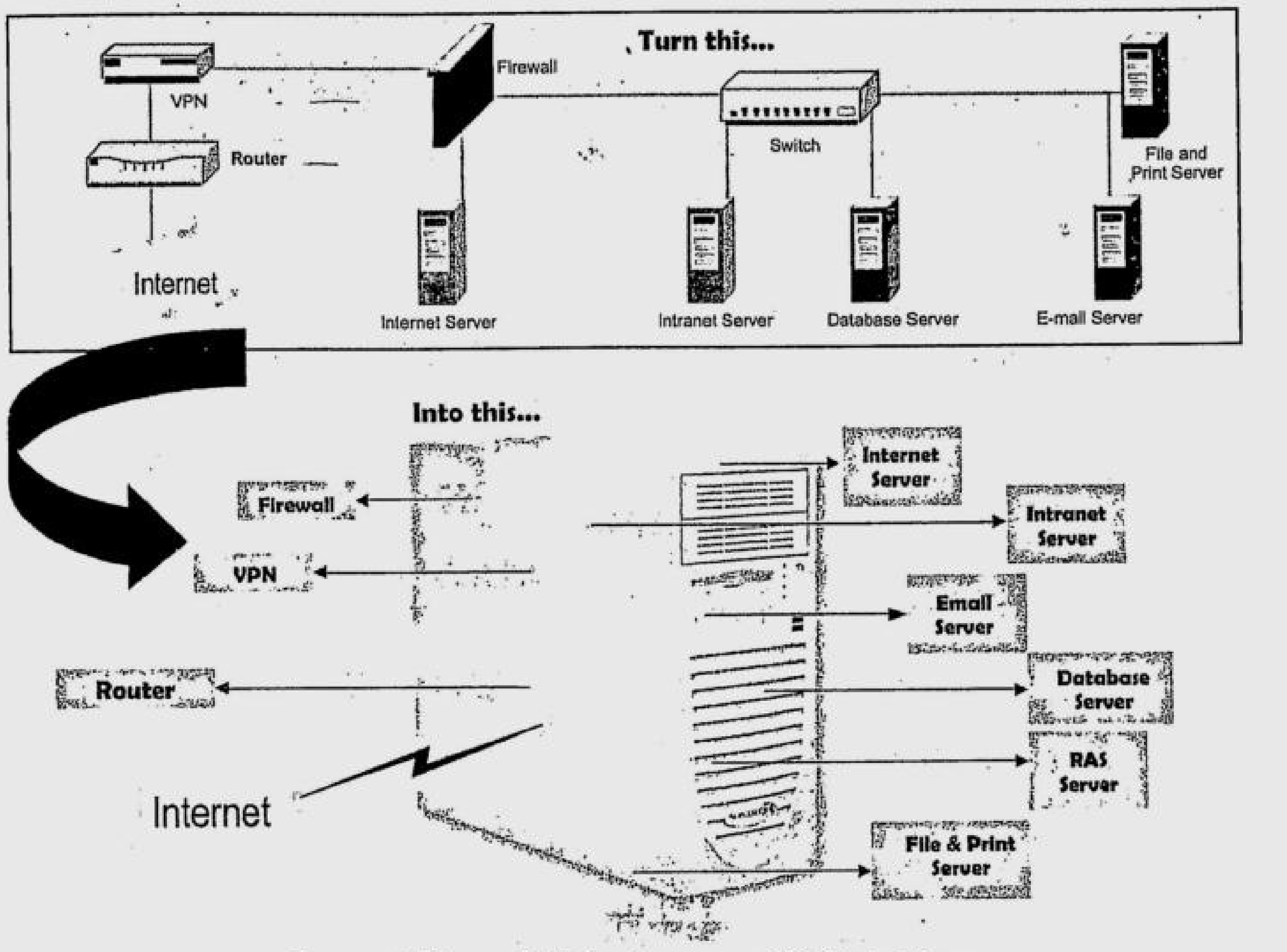

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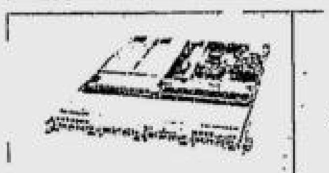
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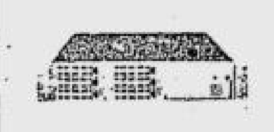
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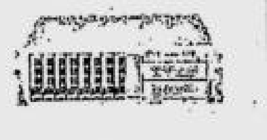
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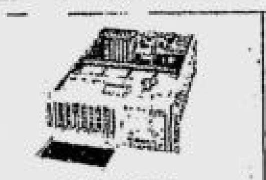
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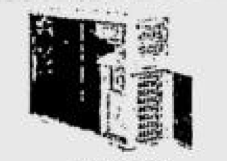
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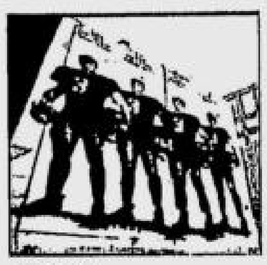
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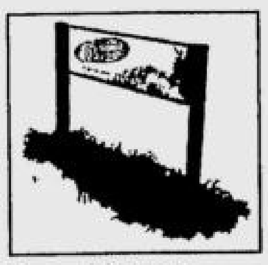
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Gov't websites defaced in hacking spree

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

DAYS before lawmakers started trading barbs over the passage of the 2005 national budget, a notorious hacker broke into the House of Representatives' website at congress.gov.ph.

According to zone-h, an online repository of web defacements, the Congress website was defaced on Feb. 27, at 6:05 p.m.

The hacker behind the attack, zone-h said, is "batistuta," a notorious hacker known to engage in mass defacements of websites around the world.

Batistuta managed to deface the http://www.congress.gov.ph/tour/guestbook.php of the Congress website. Zone-h said Congress was using a Linux-based system but the web server was running on Apache.

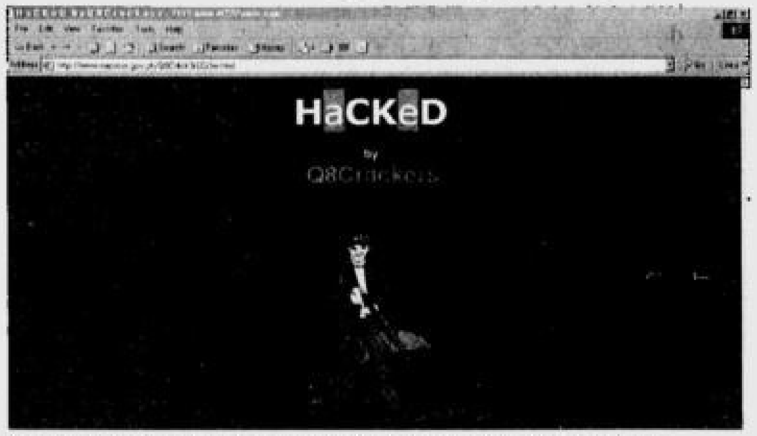
Internet security expert Wilson Chua of Bitstop Inc. suspected that the hacker exploited a "PHP" vulnerability.

The Congress website was restored late Friday night.

Other government websites were also hit in the past few days. On March 2, a portion of the National Power Corp. website was modified. As of Saturday night, the hacked Napocor website remained unchanged.

Other Philippine government websites that were hacked, according to zone-h, are:

1) 03/02/2005: http://forums.bohol.gov.ph
2) 03/02/2005: http://www.napocor.gov.ph/Q8Cr4ck3rSCr3w.html
3) 02/27/2005: http://www.congress.gov.ph/tour/guestbook.php
4) 02/23/2005: http://www.quezoncity.gov.ph/pcv.txt
5) 02/05/2005: http://www.quedancor.gov.ph/ASP/Web%20Forum/forum



THE NAPOCOR website was rendered powerless by hackers

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May 25 – 26, 2005
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EXTREME MARKETING CHALLENGE :
THE ROAD TO CONVERGENCE

PROGRAMME

DAY 1 : May 25, 2005
Morning Sessions

8:00 – 9:30 Registration/ Networking/ Morning Coffee

9:30 – 10 :15 Opening Ceremonies

10:15- 11:15 Session One :
A Business Philosophy for Extreme Marketing: Pushing Your Limits in a Crisis Economy
A presentation on the business philosophies surrounding extreme marketing that have maximized marketing potentials in a challenging convergent environment aptly applied to the Asian Region as well as the local scenarios
Speaker: Dr. Ned Roberto*

11:15- 12:15 Session Two :
The Taste that Conquered the Nation Now Conquers the World
Insights of successful ventures of home grown concepts in the food business that managed to converge its products and services to meet the demands of a converging market both in the local as well as in the global setting
Speaker: Ms Inez Reyes*

Lunch Break

Afternoon Sessions

1:30 – 1:45 Ice Breaker

1:45 – 2:45 Session Three :
Pain Makes Gains : Pharmaceutical Companies Going Beyond Pain
Proven local brand strategic applications in the pharmaceutical business that challenge global market leaders and players in creating ideal synergies for a convergent market
Speaker: Mr. Do Ejercito*

2:45 – 3:45 Session Four :
The New Empire : Shaping the Future of High - Rise Condominiums
Guiding principles in braving the battle against big brothers in the real estate business despite the threatening and unstable socio-economic scenarios affecting business growth
Speaker: Mr. Andrew Tan*

3:45 – 4 :00 Break

4:00 – 5 :00 Session Five :
Marketing Superiority Through Super Events : The "Incredible" Story
Creative marketing executions that enliven the palette of consumers using convergent applications of events marketing thus bringing product promotion to extremely challenging standards
Speaker: Mr. Ben Chan*

5:00 – 5:15 Recap by Session Chair

DAY 2 : May 26, 2005
Morning Sessions

8:00 – 9:15 Networking Coffee

9:15 – 10 :15 Session 6 :
Mega Formulas for Extreme Marketing from a Marketing Guru
A discussion on strategic principles of extreme marketing as presented by the world-reknowned Hermawan Katajaya
Speaker: Mr. Hermawan Kartajaya

10:15- 12:15 Session 7 :
The Telecommunications Industry (Illustration)

Part 1 :
Revealed : Telecommunications Convergence: Challenge to the Extreme!
Current trends and future strategic directions of the highly evolving telecommunications industry amidst the challenge of simultaneous product and market convergence
Speaker: Mr. Gerry Ablaza*

Part 2 :
The Call Center Phenomenon : Converging Global Business Interests
A deeper analysis of the fast expanding call center commerce and its significant role in the convergence of business interests around the world
Speaker: Mr. Gavin Coombes*

Lunch Break

Afternoon Sessions

1:00– 1:15 Ice Breaker 2

1:15 – 1:30 Agora Awards Launch / Other PMA Activities

1:30 – 2:30 Session Eight :
Mall Mania : Shop Until You Drop !
Revelations in the bullet-speed growth of the retail industry and the magnetic attraction of a converging business to a market mix of unique styles but common interests
Speaker: Mr. Hans Sy*

2:30- 3:30 Session Nine :
New Rules in Market Leadership : Success Stories in Non-traditional Bank Marketing
Non-traditional rules applied to traditionally common practices that have created raves in the banking sector.
Speaker: Metrobank CEO

3:30 – 3:45 Break

3:45 – 4:30 Session Ten :
Creativity on the Edge : Media & Marketing Convergence
Strategic partnering innovations that unify media creativity and marketing excellence gearing to meet the challenge of convergence
Speaker: Mr. Meckoy Quiogue*

4:30 – 5:15 Advertising Convergence: Bringing Filipino Consumers Closer to the Brand through Humor
A compilation of the interesting facets of humor in advertising that has sent light messages to the market but delivered solid bottom results to target sales
Speaker: Mr. Jos Ortega

5:15 – 5:45 Closing Session :
The Road to Recovery through Market Convergence
A presentation of ingenuous approaches for business revivals and growth in a converging market
Speaker: Mr. JJ Roces*

5:45 – 6:00 Recap by Session Chair

* To be confirmed
** Topic title may slightly vary

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Virus frustrates lawyer's petition

By Erwin Oliva
Contributor

TO BE outwitted in the courtroom is a chance lawyers often have to face. But to botch a case because of a computer virus cuts through the heart.

In a resolution last month, the Supreme Court upheld an earlier Court of Appeals ruling denying a litigant's pleading for a deadline extension for filing a petition after a computer virus deleted it, according to the High Court's website.

Helen Dagdagan had filed a letter of protest against Marani Bacolod's Townsite Sales Application in the Department of Environment and Natural Resources of the Cordillera Administrative Region (DENR-CAR). It was a dispute over public land.

The DENR-CAR dismissed Dagdagan's petition so her lawyer filed for a motion for reconsideration, but again it was denied.

Petitioner Dagdagan elevated her case to the Office of the President, but then Executive Secretary Ronaldo Zamora also denied her appeal, affirming DENR-CAR's decision.

Dagdagan then filed a motion for extension under "Rule 43 of the 1997 Rules of Civil Procedure, as amended by the Court of Appeals." This rule requires that an appeal be filed within 15 days. It allows only one motion for reconsideration, by which the Court of Appeals can grant a 15-day extension for filing a petition for review "for the most compelling reason[s]."

The Court of Appeals granted the extension and Dagdagan was given 15 days to file her petition. Sadly, before the 15-day deadline could expire, Dagdagan's lawyer filed for an "urgent ex-parte motion for [an] extension" of five days, on the grounds that he lost the entire draft of his petition due to a computer virus.

The Court of Appeals denied the second motion for extension and subsequently dismissed Dagdagan's petition on the grounds that she was not able to file the petition on time.

According to the Supreme Court's resolution, "deviations from the rules cannot be tolerated. The rationale for this strict attitude is not difficult to appreciate. These rules are designed to facilitate the orderly disposition of appealed cases. In an age where courts are bedeviled by clogged dockets, these rules need to be followed by litigants with greater fidelity. Their observance cannot be left to their whims and caprices. Moreover, rules of procedure are tools designed to promote efficiency and orderliness as well as to facilitate attainment of justice, such that strict adherence thereto is required."

The High Court resolution said the Court of Appeals' decision to deny extension was because the petitioner's reason was "not compelling" enough.

The petitioner's lawyer, said the High Court, would not have encountered a problem if he had been systematic in his work, as he could have saved the encoded petition in a diskette and printed it.

The case is filed under the title, "GR No. 147848, Helen G. Dagdagan vs. Marani Bacolod, January 24, 2005."

Web backgrounds in Powerpoint 2003 slide presentations

By Jerry Liao

POWERTIPS

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Oil rally stalls on Opec output rise possibility

NEW YORK—A sharp rally in world oil prices to near-record peaks stalled on Friday after Opec-member Nigeria said the cartel may agree later this month to raise output to cool the red-hot market.

US light crude settled up 21 cents to $53.78 a barrel, after dropping as low as $52.90 in open call trade. A rally that started at midweek had prices briefly within 50 cents of last October's $55.67 record.

London Brent crude fell 15 cents to $51.80 a barrel after hitting $53 on Thursday, its highest price in 17 years of trade on the International Petroleum Exchange.

Nigeria's presidential advisor on petroleum, Edmund Daukoru, told Reuters in an interview that members were eager to prevent high prices from damaging world economic growth and could agree to raise quotas or relax compliance.

"I can see two potential outcomes: that discipline would be relaxed so everybody could really do close to their available potential, except Saudi Arabia. We may, on the other hand, take a definite increase in production, in quota," Daukoru said.

Opec will meet in Iran March 16.

Daukoru added that Nigeria continued to favor a US oil price between $45 and $55 per barrel, but that a sustained price above $55 would harm global economic growth.

Many Opec ministers are wary of boosting output ahead of an expected seasonal decline in post-winter demand, fearing that a hefty increase in consumer inventories could weaken prices.

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez said on Friday that Opec does not need to increase production when it meets later this month.

High energy prices have also raised hackles in consumer countries.

Energy analysts said that despite the calmer market Friday, a fresh bull rally could be around the corner.

"In my opinion we are going to see higher prices than we have seen, but the market is taking a breather," said John Brady at ABN Amro in New York. *Reuters*

Opel to build GM mid-size cars, not Saab

FRANKFURT—General Motors, the world's biggest carmaker, said Friday it had chosen its German unit Opel over Swedish subsidiary Saab to make its mid-size cars in the future in return for big concessions from the German workforce in terms of pay and working hours.

"GM has decided to build specific Opel and Saab models, based on a common platform, at (Opel's main site) Ruesselsheim from 2008," GM Europe announced in a statement.

Following an "intensive" analysis of both the Ruesselsheim site just outside Frankfurt and Saab's Trollhaettan plant outside Goeteborg in Sweden, GM Europe found the German plant was 200 million euros ($260 million) more cost-effective than the Swedish factory.

The in-depth analysis examined each factory in terms of output capacity, investment, labor costs, efficiency, flexibility, logistics and currency.

And while both sites had come up with convincing arguments, "at the end of the day, it was Ruesselsheim that had the slight advantage," GM Europe chair Fritz Henderson said.

Saab chief Peter Augustsson said there was no bad feeling between the rival plants.

"It's not about Sweden or Germany. It's about western Europe versus Asia," he said.

Following GM's announcement last October of drastic cost-cutting measures and thousands of job cuts to turn around its loss-making European operations, Ruesselsheim and Trollhaettan were forced to compete against each other to build GM's new mid-size cars in Europe, including Opel's Vectra model and Saab's 9.3.

The mid-size models are aimed as rivals to BMW's 3-series and Mercedes's C-Class.

In order to win the race and hold on to their jobs, Opel workers were prepared to make big concessions, including a wage freeze until 2010, a reduction in their annual Christmas bonuses and more flexible working hours of between 30 and 40 hours a week, depending on demand.

In return, management had pledged not to implement any compulsory redundancies or shut down any European factories until 2010.

Ruesselsheim would build the Opel Vectra and Saab 9.3 models from 2007. With annual output at 293,000 cars, the plant would be able to operate at a high level of capacity. *AFP*

S. Korea sees continuing recovery

SEOUL—South Korea's finance ministry said on Friday recent economic data suggested private consumption remained on course for a sustained recovery from an extended slump.

The ministry said in a report the future pace of recovery would depend on the jobs market trend. It also said higher international oil prices and a firmer won currency had not yet had an impact on the economy.

The report came after a series of economic statistics have raised expectations that a recovery in South Korea's economy, Asia's third largest, may be broadening as stubbornly weak domestic demand picks up.

"The future scope and pace of recovery in private consumption will be significantly influenced by the improvement in the real purchasing power in households (in accordance with) employment and wage trends," said the report.

Finance Minister Lee Hun-jai has said the ministry would release more up-to-date economic data to supplement existing monthly or quarterly indicators.

Financial markets are likely to keep a close eye on comments from the central bank governor on March 10, when the Bank of Korea holds its monthly meeting to set interest rates.

The central bank cut interest rates by a quarter of a percentage point in both August and November in a bid to kick-start consumer spending, on top of two cuts in 2003.

Credit card usage rose 8.8 percent in the year through February following January's 14.8 percent rise, while department store sales in February grew about 6 percent on a year earlier following January's 2.8 percent drop, the report said.

It said the service sector, which contributes more than half of South Korea's annual gross domestic product, would show faster growth in February than in January, thanks to brisk retail sales during the Lunar New Year holidays.

Earlier on Friday, the statistics agency said the service sector index rose 0.7 percent in the year through January, marking the second month in a row that the sector showed growth over a year earlier. *Reuters*

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Antipolo City
HILLS OF MALALTA
HOUSE & LOT

Antipolo City
COTTONWOODS HEIGHTS
HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 203 sqm. F.A. 116 sqm. P 2,100,000
L.A. 243 sqm. F.A. 220 sqm. P 2,230,000
L.A. 266 sqm. F.A. 136 sqm. P 2,700,000
L.A. 340 sqm. F.A. 147 sqm. P 3,100,000
L.A. 404 sqm. F.A. 168 sqm. P 3,600,000

Antipolo City
BENTLEY PARK SUBD.
HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 180 sqm. P 630,000
L.A. 180 sqm. P 666,000
L.A. 200 sqm. P 700,000
L.A. 218 sqm. P 763,000
L.A. 219 sqm. P 766,500
L.A. 229 sqm. P 801,500
L.A. 246 sqm. P 861,000
L.A. 276 sqm. P 966,000
L.A. 265 sqm. P 980,500

Antipolo City
WOODROW
HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 50 sqm. F.A. 40 sqm. P 400,000
L.A. 143 sqm. F.A. 38 sqm. P 775,000
L.A. 65 sqm. F.A. 65 sqm. P 790,000

San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan
CARISSA HOMES
HOUSE & LOT

Caloocan City
PALMERA SPRING
HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 50 sqm. F.A. 36 sqm. P 520,000
L.A. 96 sqm. F.A. 67 sqm. P 750,000
L.A. 99 sqm. F.A. 48 sqm. P 1,200,000
L.A. 50 sqm. F.A. 48 sqm. P 470,000

Dasmariñas, Cavite
LA MEDITERRANEA
HOUSE & LOT

Imus, Cavite
SUNNYDALE EXEC. SUBD.
HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 90 sqm. F.A. 25 sqm. P 290,000
L.A. 90 sqm. F.A. 28 sqm. P 300,000
L.A. 109 sqm. F.A. 25 sqm. P 330,000
L.A. 88 sqm. F.A. 30 sqm. P 470,000
L.A. 137 sqm. F.A. 31 sqm. P 530,000
L.A. 167 sqm. F.A. 30 sqm. P 790,000

Sta. Rosa, Laguna
BELLE REVE
RESIDENTIAL LOT
530 sqm. P 3,000,000
501 sqm. P 3,300,000
546 sqm. P 3,500,000
615 sqm. P 3,700,000
637 sqm. P 4,000,000
690 sqm. P 4,100,000
696 sqm. P 4,100,000
711 sqm. P 4,300,000
727 sqm. P 4,400,000
735 sqm. P 4,400,000
744 sqm. P 4,500,000
834 sqm. P 5,000,000

Sta. Rosa, Laguna
LA RESIDENCIA
RESIDENTIAL LOT
150 sqm. P 900,000
182 sqm. P 1,000,000
174 sqm P 1,100,000
232 sqm P 1,300,000
276 sqm P 1,500,000
150 sqm. P 1,800,000
335 sqm P 2,300,000

Sta. Maria, Laguna
PALMERA HOMES
HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 73 sqm. F.A. 36 sqm. P 130,000
L.A. 83 sqm. F.A. 36 sqm. P 130,000
L.A. 100 sqm. F.A. 26 sqm. P 140,000
L.A. 97 sqm. F.A. 36 sqm. P 140,000

San Pedro, Laguna
LA MAREA
HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 135 sqm. F.A. 76 sqm. P 1,200,000
L.A. 120 sqm F.A. 64 sqm P 1,225,000
L.A. 118 sqm P.A. 64 sqm P 1,300,000
L.A. 120 sqm F.A. 94 sqm P 1,340,000
L.A. 128 sqm F.A. 94 sqm P 1,395,000
L.A. 181 sqm. F.A. 167 sqm. P 2,800,000
L.A. 573 sqm F.A. 82 sqm P 3,056,000

Las Piñas
BF RESORT EXEC. VILL.
HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 100 sqm. F.A. 60 sqm. P 1,020,000
L.A. 100 sqm. F.A. 60 sqm. P 1,250,000
L.A. 150 sqm. F.A. 68 sqm. P 1,500,000
L.A. 100 sqm. F.A. 60 sqm. P 2,385,000
L.A. 240 sqm. F.A. 395 sqm P 5,960,000

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Miramonte Hts, Camarin Rd., Nova
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RCBC2_SB002 - HOUSE & LOT
L.A. 83 sqm. F.A. 40 sqm.
L4 B2 Tierra Nova, Royale Subd
Min. Bid Price: P 550,000

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Trial supports L-carnitine

PEOPLE who suffer a heart attack now have a greater chance of survival unlike in years past. New technology, more effective drug treatments and current research all contribute to a patient's chance to live a normal and longer life after a heart attack.

Heart attack, the most common term used for myocardial infarction (MI), is often used to refer to signs and symptoms that result when blood flow to a certain portion of the heart is blocked. When this happens, there is not enough oxygen that flows to the heart that causes it to die.

Results of a clinical trial, published` in the American Heart Journal in February 2000, provide evidence for the use of a naturally occurring substance for patients who suffered from a heart attack. The L-Carnitine Ecocardiografia Digitalizzata Infarto Miocardico (Cedim) trial, a multi-center, randomized, double-blind trial, reported that in addition to the standard cardiac medications, metabolic intervention with L-carnitine may be a therapeutic approach for preventing left ventricular dilatation or enlargement of the heart among heart attack patients.

According to the study, left ventricular dilatation after acute MI is a powerful predictor of progressive functional deterioration that culminates in heart failure and death. The Cedim trial, conducted by Iliceto et al, tested the efficacy of L-carnitine administration on long-term left ventricular dilation. A total of 472 patients with a first acute MI received either a placebo (dummy pill) or L-carnitine, both of which was given at a dose of 9 g/day intravenously for the first five days and 6 g/day orally for the next 12 months.

A reduction in left ventricular dilation or enlargement of the heart muscle in the first year after acute MI was observed in patients treated with L-carnitine compared with those who received placebo. Results suggest that the early and long-term administration of L-carnitine may limit adverse effects of heart attack, thus improving a heart attack patient's chance of survival.

A deficiency of L-carnitine in the body can cause oxygen deprivation in the heart muscle that can lead to angina and heart disease. L-carnitine deficiency results when there is not enough carnitine to meet the body's needs. For people with heart problems, myocardial carnitine deprivation occurs during ischemia (a condition in which blood flow is restricted to a part of the body), acute MI (heart attack), and cardiac failure (a disorder in which the heart loses its ability to pump blood efficiently).

The heart and skeletal muscles rely on the breakdown of fats for energy in order to function properly. L-carnitine works as a carrier as it shuttles fats into the cells and into the mitochondria where it is broken down and converted into energy.

L-carnitine is an essential nutrient that is synthesized by the amino acids lysine and methionine in the body. It was first isolated from meat (carnus), from which its name was also derived. L-carnitine is most commonly found in red meat, fish and dairy products.

The United States Food and Drug Administration has approved L-carnitine as a therapy for low energy levels, congestive heart disease, and other diseases associated with low cellular energy levels. In the Philippines, L-carnitine (Carnicor) is manufactured by Pascual Laboratories.

For more information on the benefits of L-carnitine, call the Carnicor Hotline at 920-1911 local 146 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Friday.

PRSP elects De Quiros

DE QUIROS

MA. AMYLYN S. de Quiros, a professional PR specialist and president of Full Circle Communications, is the new president of the Public Relations Society of the Philippines for 2005-2006.

A graduate of the University of the Philippines in Diliman, De Quiros earned her spurs from actual immersion in the PR world. She has had stints at the Bureau of National and Foreign Information, Philippine News Agency and the International Press Center.

One of her career highs was her tenure at the Land Bank of the Philippines, where she served as PR counsel to the president and CEO and other senior officers. As vice president for public affairs, De Quiros strengthened the bank's PR and advertising programs as well as its corporate communications and media relations arms.

In 1999, she earned an APR (accredited PR practitioner) title, a coveted status, from the PRSP, which signifies a high professional level of expertise and competence in PR work.

She was the president of the Bank Marketing Association of the Philippines in 2000. She also served as chairperson of various committees, which include the 4th BMAP National Convention and PRSP's 35th Anvil Awards.

Other elected PRSP officers are Maloli Espinosa of ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp as VP internal; Butch Raquel of GMA-7 Network as VP external; Rochelle Hilario of Asian Terminals Inc as secretary; Angel Doble of Philippine National Bank as treasurer; Rocky Dimaculangan of Ayala Land as internal auditor, and Dante Velasco of Creative Point Inc as PRO, Joel Lacsamana, Manila Water Company Inc and Ritzi Villarico Ronquilla of Manila Electric Company.

Point, shoot, e-mail, print in minutes

IT USED to be that you ended up whining and sighing at photos that turned out less than expected, just after going to a developing lab and paying for expensive film. What a waste of precious shots, precious time, and precious memories.

Delete those depressing images from your memory. Now, you get instant feedback after taking each shot. Do anything: delete, reshoot, or customize your images, even before the first printouts come out.

How? It's a snap with the pocket-sized HP Photosmart 4.1 megapixel R607 digital camera. And you can get comfy operating it in less than 10 minutes. Learn key functions easily with quick access buttons, or choose preset exposure controls in the flick of a button.

Worried about bright sunlight or shadows playing unwanted tricks on your shot? There's HP's adaptive lighting technology, so you can take consistently great photos under any lighting condition. A built-in color graphic display enables you to immediately review each shot.

Never anger a loved one again when you show him or her your "red-eye" shot. Find and remove "red eyes" instantly after the shot-before anyone else gets to see it.

Then, when your images are picture-perfect, you can e-mail them all to friends anywhere they may be. Or you may choose to compile a good old photo album first before showing them all off when you all get together. That's easy as 1-2-3. Transfer your images to your laptop. Print directly from a PictBridge-compatible camera, or print wirelessly from Bluetooth-enabled devices. And if you have an HP PSC 2355 all-in-one, you can print each photo without using a PC. All you need is the built-in memory card. View, select and print any photo with just a pen on the photo proof sheet technology. The HP Photosmart 325 compact photo printer becomes a mobile digital photo lab for 4 x 6-inch prints. The HP Photosmart 8450 photo printer, on the other hand, can harness up to 72 million different color and grayscale combinations on its eight-ink color printing system.

HP PHOTOSMART R607

Stylishly small but boasting a large color screen and 3x optical zoom perfect for neophytes with its image-advice features, the HP Photosmart R607 digital camera fits into the lifestyle and luggage of people in a hurry and who need to travel light.

For action enthusiasts, the R607 even allows for sharp and dramatic shots on its "action mode" setting. On the "rapid fire burst" mode, capture those fleeting moments with four continuous shots per second.What a perfect partner to come in handy on your next summer break.

If you want a more intense image-capturing experience, try the powerful 5-megapixel, 24x total zoom Photosmart R707 digital camera, and get astounding panoramic previews.

Snap out of those outdated photo developing doldrums. Call Alvin Bagasan now at 888-5900 or e-mail Alvin.bagasan@hp.com and get introduced to the HP digital imaging technology.

Bits & Clips

Pilmico training schedule

THE PILMICO Baking Center wishes to announce the Diamond Bakery Training schedule for 2005. All bakers and bakery owners are invited to join one of the Diamond Bakery training dates from March 7 to 19, May 9 to 21, July 4 to 16, and Sept. 5 to 17. The Diamond Bakery Training is a two-week training program conducted by Pilmico Foods and Pilmico-Mauri Foods for its bakery partners and customers. It includes both practical and technical lessons from bakery management to bakery mathematics. It is facilitated by well-experienced Pilmico technicians who have undergone advanced technical baking training at the American Institute of Baking in Kansas and the UFM Baking School in Bangkok, Thailand. Applicants may e-mail customer_first@pilmico.com.

Museo Pambata invites

THE MUSEO Pambata Foundation, which runs the premier children's interactive museum in the country, will hold the second Establishing Children's Museums (ECM), an intensive six-week seminar-workshop from April 4 to May 13. Opened to the public December 1994, Museo Pambata has distinguished itself in the museum and education field for its innovative "hands on" exhibits and child-focused programs. The second ECM seminar will help start new children's museums in other parts of the country, bringing Museo Pambata's brand of hands-on discovery learning to more Filipino children. Application forms for ECMs are available at the Museo Pambata office (Roxas Boulevard corner South Drive, Manila), or you may download it from http://www.museopambata.org and fax to 522-1246. Deadline of submission of application is on March 7. For more information, call 523-1797 to 98 (Alona Felipe).

Seminar on TQM

KAIZEN Management Systems Inc (www.kaizenmgtsys.com) will conduct a seminar on Total Quality Management (TQM) on March 7 and 8 at Traders Hotel Manila, Pasay City. This two-day seminar will discuss the concepts and principles of Total Quality Management based on Continuous Process Improvement (Kaizen) strategy. The TQM-Kaizen strategy provides for continuous improvement of quality, cost, and delivery (QCD) requirements through continuous improvement of people and processes. Through examples and workshops, the seminar will demonstrate the power of TQM-kaizen as a powerful strategy for competitiveness. Interested parties may call 687-7059 to 60 or e-mail blukaizen@vasia.com.

Ron Kaufman on service excellence

WORLD-RENOWNED customer service innovator Ron Kaufman will share his views on customer partnerships and quality service in a seminar titled "Building Customer Relationships that Sizzle" on March 7 at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel. The seminar, now in its sixth run, offers a unique approach to service management that will not just meet client expectations but exceed them with dramatic results, according to Kaufman. With the market becoming increasingly competitive, businesses need an edge over competitors in order to maintain customer loyalty and patronage. Kaufman is an internationally acclaimed expert in customer partnerships and service excellence with many years of professional experience in many countries. The seminar is presented by strategic marketing and communications firm TeamAsia. Call TeamAsia at 757-3500.

SONY

Sony Introduces New Grand WEGA Projection Televisions with Megapixel H-LCD

(from L-R) Mr. Larry Secreto, Deputy Director of HAV Group, Sony Phils, Mr. Hiroaki Kobayashi, President & Managing Director, Sony Phils, Mr. Kazuhiro Tsuchiya, Product Planning Manager, Sony Corporation, & Mr. Hironori Kato, Asst. Gen. Manager, TV Marketing, Sony Marketing Asia Pacific

February 17 marked the introduction of the latest, most sophisticated, and definitely the grandest of the Wega line of TVs – the Grand Wega. Employing the combined ingenuity of cutting-edge Megapixel H-LCD technology and the exclusive WEGA Engine, Sony's new Grand WEGA, a micro-display LCD rear projection TV, produces impeccable picture quality and brings home a close -to-theatrical experience. Available in 42-inch (KF-WE42), 50-inch (KF-WE50) and 60-inch (KF-WS60) screens, the Grand WEGA features a slim line, futuristic design and perfect viewing from wide angles, truly revolutionary technologies in rear projection televisions.

First-hand viewers witnessed in awe as the Grand Wega was presented in the recent presscon held at the Makati Shangri-la Hotel. Unveiling was led by Mr. Larry Secreto, Deputy Director of Home Audio Video, Mr. Kazuhiro Tsuchiya, Product Planning Manager, Home Network Company of Sony Corporation, and Mr. Hiroaki Kobayashi, President and Managing Director of Sony Philippines.

Friends from the media witnessed the unveiling of the latest and grandest Wega.

The distinguished panel during the Grand Wega launch at Makati Shangri-la Hotel last February 17.

"The Grand Wega aims to increase market share of large screen TVs more than 50%", stressed Mr.Secreto during the launch.

The Grand WEGA boasts the performance of Megapixel H-LCD technology

MegaPixel H-LCD

The Grand WEGA boasts the performance of Megapixel H-LCD. It works using state-of-the-art High-temperature Polysilicone 3-LCD Panel technology. Light signals are divided into its pure Red, Green and Blue primary color components by dichroic mirrors. Displayed on each panel at a resolution of 1.05 million dots, each color dot is optimized, appearing as shades and highlights, giving improved definition. These color rays are then combined through a dichroic prism and projected onto the screen at a total picture resolution of 3.15 million dots. The result is a highly detailed picture quality with brilliant, clear and natural colors.

WEGA Engine

With Sony's unique Wega Engine technology, viewing quality is even further enhanced. Beautiful and true-to-life picture quality is engineered through this intelligent picture enhancement system integrates a host of unique technologies and circuitry, enabling full, precise digital image processing. Fully compatible with analogue and digital broadcasts, DVD, Memory Stick and other input signals, images appear stunningly realistic, with amazing detail and sharpness, reduced noise, enhanced clarity, and improved depth and contrast.

HD Ready

With full AV connectivity, the Sony Grand WEGA is equipped with multiple component inputs that enable connection to a myriad of digital and analogue sources. Receptive to High Definition and DVD Progressive signals, in addition to standard NTSC / PAL signals, and coupled with the powerful WEGA Engine that further enhances the quality of images, spectacular digital realism is achieved through DVD movies or Digital TV broadcasts.

Memory Stick Capability

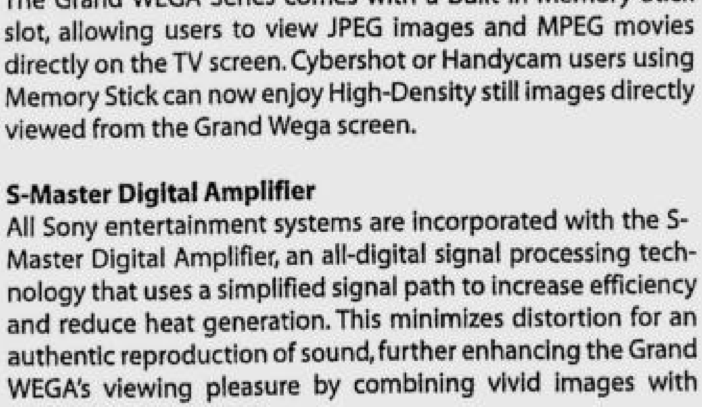
The Grand WEGA Series comes with a built-in Memory Stick slot, allowing users to view JPEG images and MPEG movies directly on the TV screen. Cybershot or Handycam users using Memory Stick can now enjoy High-Density still images directly viewed from the Grand Wega screen.

S-Master Digital Amplifier

All Sony entertainment systems are incorporated with the S-Master Digital Amplifier, an all-digital signal processing technology that uses a simplified signal path to increase efficiency and reduce heat generation. This minimizes distortion for an authentic reproduction of sound, further enhancing the Grand WEGA's viewing pleasure by combining vivid images with true-to-life sound quality.

GRAND WEGA

KF-WE42A1	KF-WS60A1	KF-WE50A1
42"	60"	50"
PHP 199,000.00	PHP 299,000.00	PHP 239,000.00



Visit www.sonygrandwega.com.ph for more details on the Grand Wega.

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Our Dearly Beloved

FRANCISCA W. YANG

Peacefully joined our Lord on March 4, 2005 at the age of 85.

Her loving husband, **Charles L. Yang**; children, **Jane & Henry Lee, William & Nina Juinio, David & Bae Uy, Doris & Prudy Bautista, Jordan & Virgin Dytoc, Richard & Shirley Fong**; grandchildren & great grandchildren, other relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her body lies in state at Arlington Memorial Chapels, 12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will take place on Thursday, March 10, 2005 at 8:00 AM at the La Funeraria Paz after 6:30 AM Mass at Arlington Chapel.

Please omit flowers.

Whoever finds his life will lose it, and whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.

Matthew 10:39

SOLEDAD DEL PRADO

(Viuda de Antonio Aspillera)

Entregó su alma al Señor el Sábado 5 de Marzo, en el Makati Medical Center.
Sus restos mortales estaran en St. Alphonsus de Ligouri,
Capilla 2 (Magallanes Village, Makati) a partir del Domingo 6 de Marzo.
Misas: Domingo dia 6, Lunes dia 7, Martes dia 8 y
Miercoles dia 9 de Marzo, las seis y media de la tarde (6:30 PM).
El entierro tendrá lugar despiés de la Misa que se
celebrará el Jueves dia 10 de Marzo las ocho de la mañana (8AM).

Sus hijos desconsolados
Carlos
Maria Angela
Regina y Paul Ligorres
Isabel y Jose Macicior
Anthony y Kathleen (Mendezona)

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...
INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:
❶ Copy of Death Certificate;
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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MESSAGE OF THANKS

We, the family of the late

CO CHING aka Peter Sy Seng Lo

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all of you, our relatives and friends who had offered masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy, spent precious time with us, made donations and expressed in countless ways your love, concern, comfort and support during our time of sorrow.

In Loving Memory
on the
Seventh Death Anniversary
of

FILOMENA L. CONTRERAS

November 22, 1906 – March 7, 1998

Holy Masses will be offered today, March 7, 2005
at the following:

Family Residence	Makati City	5:00 PM
Santuario de San Antonio	Forbes Park, Makati City	7:30 AM
St. Alphonsus Mary De Liguori	Magallanes Village Makati City	7:00 AM
Our Lady of the Abandoned	Sta. Ana, Manila	6:30 AM
Santuario de San Jose	Greenhills, San Juan	7:15 AM
Mary The Queen	Madison Street San Juan	7:00 AM
St. Joseph Parish	Project 3, Quezon City	7:00 AM
Immaculate Conception Parish	Lantana Street, Cubao Quezon City	7:00 AM
Christ the King Seminary	Eulogio Rodriguez, Quezon City	7:00 AM
Our Lady of Mt. Carmel Church	Lipa City, Batangas	6:00 AM
San Sebastian Cathedral	Lipa City, Batangas	6:00 AM
Don Bosco Parish Church	Pasay Road, Makati City	7:00 AM

We, her Family, request relatives, friends and pious
readers to join us in prayer for the eternal repose of her soul.

We thank You Lord, for the Joys of Love
and Life we had with her. We pray she will be with
You in Your kingdom. Thine be the Power and Glory forever.

Dr. Milagros Abellonosa de Jesus

Now peacefully rests in the Grace and Goodness of our Lord on March 5, 2005 at the age of 69.

Her loving husband **Jay**; her children and children-in-law **Nicco & Connie; Marlo & Maeanne; Ariel & Cindy; Nini & Janjan, Couqui**; grandchildren **Enzo & Achim, Mark & Joshua, AJ & Aeren**, and **Nidge**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at the Molave Chapel, La Funeraria Paz-Sucat (inside Manila Memorial Park) Parañaque City.

Interment will be on Thursday, March 10, 2005 at the Manila Memorial Park after the 7:00 a.m. Mass.

'For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.'

John 3:16

CLASSIFIEDS

Republic of the Philippines
PROVINCE OF BUKIDNON
8700 Malaybalay City
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

ITB No. 200-05-01

The Provincial Government of Bukidnon with Office address at Capitol Compound, City of Malaybalay, Bukidnon is inviting bids from responsible suppliers for Secondary School Armchairs with an Approved Budget for the Contract amounting to P2,475,000.00.

SCHEDULEOF ACTIVITIES

Particulars	Date	Venue
Deadline of submission of eligibility requirements	March 23, 2005	BAC Secretariat, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
Checking of Eligibility Requirements by the Technical Working Group	March 29, 2005 (10:00 AM)	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol
Pre-Bid Conference	April 5, 2005 9:30 AM	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol
Issuance of Bidding Documents to Eligible Bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P500.00	April 6-8, 2005	Provincial General Services Office, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City
Opening of Bids in Sealed Envelope	April 12, 2005 (10.00 AM)	BAC Conference Room, Provincial Capitol, Malaybalay City

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding and evaluation of bids and awards of contract shall be governed by the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of RA 9184 otherwise known as the Government Procurement Act.

For inquiry, please call telephone numbers 088-221-2537 and 088-813-2522.

The Provincial Government of Bukidnon-BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any required formality and award the contract to any bidder whose proposal as evaluated by the BAC & TWG is most advantageous to the government.

The PGB-BAC assumes no obligation to compensate or indemnify the bidder for any expense or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd) JOSEFREDIE F. FLORES
BAC Chairman

(PDI – March 7 & 10, 2005)

LA/MAT 15255/2004 (AJ16)
FCMC 5160/2004

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF THE HONG KONG SPECIAL ADMINISTRATIVE REGION MATRIMONIAL CAUSES NO. 5160 OF 2004

BETWEEN

EVELYN G. ALLAS Petitioner
Also known as **DELOS REYES, EVELYN ALLAS**
And
EFREN O. DELOS REYES Respondent

A DIVORCE PETITION HAS BEEN FILED AGAINST THE UNDER-MENTIONED EFREN O. DELOS REYES, last known address of Buenvista, Candelaria, Quezon Province, Philippines, who may apply at the Family Court Registry at M2 Wanchai Law Court, No. 12 Harbour Road, Hong Kong SAR for a copy of the Petition. If within one month he has not communicated with the Registry, the Court may hear the case in his absence.

Registrar

(PDI - March 7, 2005)

PNOC ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION PNOC

Energy Center, Merritt Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Philippines MCPO Box 2102 Tel. No. 893-6001/1320

INVITATION FOR PREQUALIFICATION

Civil, Structural, and Mechanical / Piping Works for the Construction of the Fluid Collection and Reinjection System for the Northern Negros Geothermal Project

Contract No.: EDC 05-034

1. The PNOC-Energy Development Corporation, hereinafter called PNOC-EDC has received an ODA Loan from Japan Bank for International Cooperation, hereinafter referred to as the JBIC, in the amount of Fourteen Billion Four Hundred Sixty Million Japanese Yen (Y14,460,000,000.00) towards the cost of the Northern Negros Geothermal Project and intends to apply a portion of the proceeds of the loan to payments under the contract for which this Invitation for Prequalification is issued. Disbursement of the Loan by JBIC will be subject, in all respects, to the terms and condions of the Loan Agreement, including the disbursement procedures and the 'Guidelines for Procurement under JBIC ODA Loans'. No party other than PNOC-EDC shall derive any rights from the Loan Agreement or have any claim to Loan proceeds.
2. JBIC requires that bidders and contractors, as well as PNOC-EDC, under contracts funded with JBIC ODA Loans and other Japanese ODA, observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of such contracts, in pursuance of this policy, JBIC:
   (a) will reject a proposal for award if it determines that the bidder recommended for award has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for the contract in question;
   (b) will recognize a contractor as ineligible, for a period determined by JBIC, to be awarded a contract funded with JBIC ODA Loans if it at any times determines that the contractor has engaged in corrupt or fraudulent practices in competing for, or in executing, another contract funded with JBIC ODA Loans or other Japanese ODA.
3. The PNOC-EDC intends to prequalify contractors for the following work under this project: Civil, Structural, and Mechanical / Piping Works for the Construction of the Fluid Collection and Reinjection System for the Northern Negros Geothermal Project.

   The proposed Fluid Collection and Reinjection System of about 6,205 meters carbon steel pipelines shall transmit, control and process geothermal fluid to supply the power plant with commercial steam for its electric power generation. The project site is located at the western flank of Mt. Kanlaon in the province of Negros Occidental approximately 535 kilometers from Manila, specifically in Barangay Mailum, Bago City approximately 21 kilometers south of Bacolod City.
4. It is expected that Invitation for Bids will be made on April 11, 2005
5. Prequalification is open to firms and voluntarily formed joint ventures from eligible source countries, in accordance with the Guidelines for Procurement under JBIC ODA Loans.
6. Eligible applicants may obtain the prequalification documents by calling, writing, faxing, or telexing or by electronic mail: Bids and Awards Committee PNOC-Energy Development Corporation, Energy Center, Bonifacio Global City, Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines, Telephone Number (632) 893-6001 / 1320 Local 5107 / 5118, Fax Number (632) 840-1576.
7. The request must clearly state "Request for Prequalification Documents for the Civil, Structural, and Mechanical / Piping Works for the Construction of the Fluid Collection and Reinjection System for the Northern Negros Geothermal Project (EDC 05-034). The documents are available for a non-refundable fee of Five Hundred Fifty Pesos (P550.00) or Ten US Dollar ($10) for foreign bidder without a local representative. The PNOC-EDC will promptly dispatch the documents by registered airmail but under no circumstances will it be held responsible for late delivery or loss of the documents mailed.
8. A minimum requirement for qualification is to have successfully carried out as prime contractor the execution of at least two (2) projects of a nature and complexity comparable to the proposed contract within the last 12 years.
9. Submission of Applications for Prequalification in five (5) copies must be received in sealed envelopes, either delivered by hand or by registered mail to:

   Bids and Awards Committee
   PNOC-Energy Development Corporation
   Energy Center, Bonifacio Global City
   Taguig, Metro Manila, Philippines

   not later than

   5:00 PM., March 17, 2005 and be clearly marked "Application to Prequalify for the Civil, Structural, and Mechanical / Piping Works for the Construction of the Fluid Collection and Reinjection System for the Northern Negros Geothermal Project (EDC 05-034).
10. Applicants will be advised, in due course, of the results of their applications. Only firms and joint ventures prequalified under this procedure will be invited to bid.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI--March 7, 2005)

NATIONAL POWER CORPORATION
Diliman, Quezon City

INVITATION TO BID FOR THE SALE OF UNSERVICEABLE ITEMS

"AS IS, WHERE IS" BASIS

DATE OF BIDDING: March 22, 2005, 2:00 PM, Solarium Hall, Building-1, Ground Floor NPC-Head Office, Agham Road corner Quezon Ave., Diliman, Q.C.

The National Power Corporation will conduct public bidding for the sale of the following:

ITEM	DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION	MIN. BID PRICE
	Schedule I	
-1-	One (1) Lot: Unserviceable, Used and Junk Substation Equipment (OCB, GCB, CT, PT, DS); General Plant Equipment and Parts, Assorted Scrap Metals and Power Cables. Located at NPC Bataan TPP compound and at TRANSCO Limay Substation stockyard, Barangay Luz, Limay Town, Bataan Province.	P1,169,590.00 per lot
	Schedule II	
-1-	One (1) Lot: Unserviceable Power Transformer with "PCB-Free" Transformer Oil and Junk General Plant Equipment, Used Automotive/Diesel Engine Parts, Busted Lead-Acid Batteries and Assorted Scrap Metals. Located at NPC SPUG Office, KM-36 Newtown Road, Brgy. Minuyan, San Jose Del Monte City (Bulacan). Note: This disposal/sale is limited to EMB-DENR accredited Transporters and/or TSD Facility Operators (Treaters) only.	P212,985.00 per lot
	Schedule III	
-1-	One (1) Lot: Unserviceable Steel Tower Parts, Junk Substation Equipment and Empty Steel Drums. Located at TRANSCO Kalayaan EHV Substation, Caliraya, Laguna Province.	P885,000.00 per lot

ALL BIDS MUST BE SUBMITTED WITH THE FOLLOWING:

1. PROPOSAL BOND DEPOSIT IN THE FORM OF CASH OR MANAGER'S/ CASHIER'S CHECK EQUIVALENT TO TEN PERCENT (10%) OF THE TOTAL PRICE OFFER.
2. LATEST INCOME TAX RETURN (2003 or 2004) ORIGINAL OR CERTIFIED XEROX COPY FOR THE BIDDER OR AN AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT OF THE COMPANY.
3. EMB-DENR ACCREDITATIONS FOR INTERESTED PARTIES TO SCHEDULE-II

All interested parties who wish to secure the bid forms for this public bidding must present a valid Income Tax Return (2003/2004 original or BIR certified copy) and valid identification card with picture (such as Company IDs, Passport, Driver's License, PRC Licensure Card, etc.). Those who secured the bid forms for Schedule-II of the February 24, 2005 public bidding will be issued the new bid forms of Schedule-I free of charge. Interested parties for Schedule-II must present original EMB-DENR accreditations.

Interested parties who wish to participate in the public bidding may secure the bid form at P500.00/set from Mr. S.V. Lomuntad, Jr./Mr. Al Plata at MMD, Ground Floor, Bldg.-1, NPC Head Office, Corner Agham Road and Quezon Avenue, Diliman, Quezon City or call telephone no. 924-5384. Deadline for issuance of the bid forms is until 4:30 PM, March 21, 2005.

For the Materials Management Department

(Sgd.) FELIX B. TACATA, JR.
OIC, MMD

(PDI - March 7, 8 & 9, 2005)

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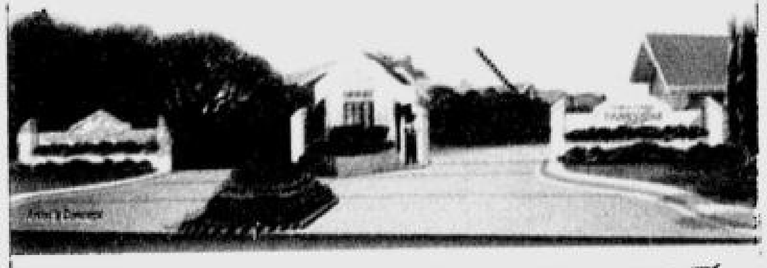

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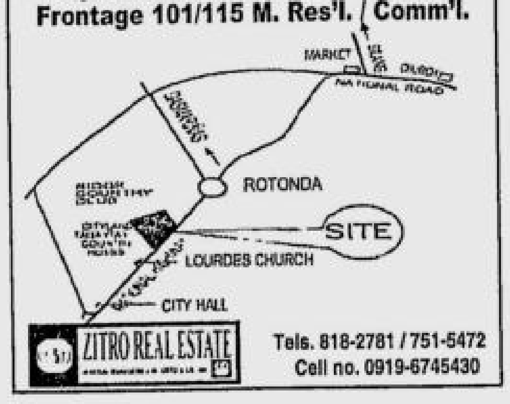

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Minimum Bid Price: 1,370,000

LAS PINAS
LOT 3 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 971 sqm.
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Minimum Bid Price: 13,459,000

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Lot Area: 6,463 sqm.
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Minimum Bid Price: 72,741,000

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LOT 5 - Unit 2705
Floor Area: 268.22 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 11,333,000

LOT 6 - Unit 2706.
Floor Area: 262.6 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 11,095,000

MALABON
LOT 7 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 786 sqm.
Floor Area: 555.7 sqm.
No. 1 Dahlia corner White Lily Street, Araneta Village, Malabon
Minimum Bid Price: 5,305,000

MUNTINLUPA CITY
LOT 8 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 319 sqm.
Lot 26, Block 3-E, Orange St., Ruby Park, Victoria Homes, Tunasan
Minimum Bid Price: 638,000

PARANAQUE CITY
LOT 9 - CONDO RESDL
Floor Area: 164.62
Unit 1703, Pacific Coast Condo Project, Coastal Road, Tambo
Minimum Bid Price: 3,000,000

LOT 10 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 749 sqm.
Lot 1, Abalone St., Jaleville Subd., Brgy. San Dionisio
Minimum Bid Price: 3,671,000

PASIG CITY
LOT 11 - CONDO RESDL
Floor Area: 167.06 sqm.
Unit 804 Pearl Plaza Condo., Pearl Drive, Ortigas Centre
Minimum Bid Price: 4,600,000

QUEZON CITY
LOT 12 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 273 sqm.
Floor Area: 285 sqm.
No. 40 Caragay St., San Francisco Del Monte
Minimum Bid Price: 2,590,000

LOT 13 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 400 sqm.
Floor Area: various
No. 28 Pisces St., Carmel V Subd., Tandang Sora
Minimum Bid Price: 4,830,000

LOT 14 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 381 sqm.
Floor Area: 176 sqm.
No. 45 East Riverside St., San Francisco Del Monte
Minimum Bid Price: 2,920,000

LOT 15 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 1,125 sqm.
Floor Area: various
#191 Katipunan Ave., Quirino Dist.
Minimum Bid Price: 28,125,000

VALENZUELA CITY
LOT 16 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 1,728 sqm.
Floor Area: 100 sqm.
Lot 6-B-4-B-2, Coloong Road I, Brgy. Coloong
Minimum Bid Price: 2,550,000

LOT 17 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 9,037 sqm.
No. 3 San Andres Canumay
Minimum Bid Price: 20,250,000

RIZAL
LOT 18 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 400 sqm.
Lot 12, Blk. 21, Road Lot 9-A, Village East Executive Homes, Barrio San Isidro, Angono
Minimum Bid Price: 420,000

LOT ONLY
Cottonwood Heights, Bo. San Isidro, Antipolo
LOT 19 - B5/L3 Teakwood
Lot Area: 287 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 861,000

LOT 20 - B5/L20 Rosewood St
Lot Area: 415 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 1,245,000

LOT 21 - B4/L20 Teakwood cor Oakwood St
Lot Area: 274 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 959,000

LOT ONLY
Metro View Ridge Estates Subd., Antipolo
LOT 22 - Block 5/Lot 16
Lot Area: 360 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 1,664,000

LOT 23 - Block 6/Lot 12
Lot Area: 390 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 1,802,000

LOT 24 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 432 sqm.
Lot 14, Blk. 32, Forest Hills Residential Estate and Golf & Country Club, Phase I, Bo. San Isidro, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price: 1,080,000

LOT 25 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 415 sqm.
Lot 15, Blk. 32, Forest Hills Residential Estate and Golf & Country Club, Phase I, Bo. San Isidro, Antipolo
Minimum Bid Price: 1,038,000

LOT 26 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 13,174 sqm.
Floor Area: 7,521.41 sqm.
Lot 1-A Sto. Domingo, Cainta, Rizal
Minimum Bid Price: 48,250,000

LOT 27 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 850 sqm.
Km. 23, Ortigas Ave. Ext., San Isidro, Taytay
Minimum Bid Price: 8,500,000

BATANGAS
LOT 28 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 286 sqm.
Floor Area: 141.5 sqm.
Lot 7, Blk. 1, Lamar St., Lamar Vill., Bo. Sabang, Lipa
Minimum Bid Price: 967,000

LOT 29 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 748 sqm.
Lot 1, Blk. 3, Palm Ridge Drive cor. Raffia Palm St., Palm Ridge Pointee, Ph. 1, Bo. Balas, Talisay
Minimum Bid Price: 1,987,000

LOT 30 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 371 sqm.
Lot 21, Blk. 19, Palmridge Pointee Subd. Talisay
Minimum Bid Price: 1,039,000

LOT 31 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 19,195 sqm.
Lot 10252-B-3-A Lot 10258-A-3 & Lot 10258-A-4, Int. J. P. Laurel Provincial Road (Talisay-Tanauan Road), Km. 71, Bo. Talaga, Tanauan
Minimum Bid Price: 7,200,000

BULACAN
LOT 32 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 24,525 sqm.
Floor Area: 121 sqm.
Bo. Tiaong, Guiguinto
Minimum Bid Price: 7,231,000

LOT 33 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 10,115 sqm.
Floor Area: various
No. 0736 Barangay Road, Bo. Mulawin, Baliuag
Minimum Bid Price: 4,300,000

LOT 34 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 1,997 sqm.
Lot 5216-B-1, Bo. Matandang Sili, Pandi, Bulacan (interior lot)
Minimum Bid Price: 999,000

LOT 35 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 4,254 sqm.
Lot 2934-A, Lot 1083-D & Lot 1079-D-1, Mabini St., Bo. Sabang, Baliuag
Minimum Bid Price: 3,144,000

LOT 36 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 67,706 sqm.
Lot 1268 & Lot 840, Along Sta. Maria-SJDM, Prov'l. Rd., Bo. Dulong Bayan, SJDM, Bulacan
Minimum Bid Price: 22,970,000

LOT 37 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 10,000 sqm.
Lot 2-C, Bo. Perez & Bahay Pare, Meycauayan
Minimum Bid Price: 27,000,000

LOT 38 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 12,870 sqm.
Lot 2602-B, Bo. Masusu, Pandi
Minimum Bid Price: 2,574,000

CAVITE
LOT 39 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 1,100 sqm.
Gov. Ferrer Ave., Brgy. Tejero, Rosario (beside SBC-Rosario Branch)
Minimum Bid Price: 6,700,000

LOT ONLY
Southwood Villas, Salitran, Dasmarinas
LOT 40 - Lot 11/Blk. 3
Lot Area: 176 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 440,000

LOT 41 - Lot 12/Blk. 3
Lot Area: 206 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 515,000

LOT ONLY
Metro Gate Subdivision, Trece Martirez City
LOT 42 - Block 212/Lot 14
Lot Area: 126 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 292,000

LOT 43 - Block 212/Lot 17
Lot Area: 120 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 278,000

LOT 44 - Block 212/Lot 18
Lot Area: 120 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 278,000

LOT 45 - Block 212/Lot 20
Lot Area: 120 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 278,000

LOT 46 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 625 sqm.
Lot 13 & 15, Blk. 31, Brgy. Quintana, Trece Martirez City
Minimum Bid Price: 875,000

LOT ONLY
Eagleridge Golf and Residential Estate, Amadeo Rd., Gen. Trias
LOT 47 - L-42 B-107 (inner lot), Birmingham St.
Lot Area: 407 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 855,000

LOT 48 - L-45 B-107 (inner lot), Birmingham St
Lot Area: 384 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 807,000

LOT 49 - L-44 B-107 (inner lot), Birmingham St.
Lot Area: 392 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 824,000

LOT 50 - L-34 B-107 (inner lot), Birmingham St.
Lot Area: 470 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 987,000

LOT 51 - L-36 B-107 (inner lot), Birmingham St
Lot Area: 454 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 954,000

LOT 52 - L-20 B-59 (fairway lot w/ share), Oxford St.
Lot Area: 654 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 1,770,000

LOT 53 - L-22 B-59 (fairway lot w/ share), Woodstock St
Lot Area: 550 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 1,410,000

LOT 54 - L-39 B-59 (fairway lot w/ share), Oxford St.
Lot Area: 560 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 1,544,000

LOT ONLY
Guardarrama Street, Altamira Subd., Puerto Azul, Brgy. Sapang, Ternate
LOT 55 - Lot 10, Blk. 6
Lot Area: 300 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 750,000

LOT 56 - Lot 11, Blk. 6
Lot Area: 300 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 750,000

LOT 57 - Lot 12, Blk. 6
Lot Area: 300 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 750,000

LOT 58 - LOT ONLY
Lot Area: 300 sqm.
Lot 6, Blk. 7, Lincoln St., PH I, The Royale Tagaytay Estate, Alfonso
Minimum Bid Price: 1,386,000

LAGUNA
LOT 59 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 324 sqm.
Floor Area: 297 sqm.
No. 8 Ortega St., San Vicente, San Pedro
Minimum Bid Price: 1,190,000

LOT 60 - LOT & IMPRVMNT
Lot Area: 240 sqm.
Floor Area: 210 sqm.
#157 Country Dr. St., Country Homes Subd., Barrio Soro-Soro, Biñan
Minimum Bid Price: 1,180,000

LOT ONLY
Southlake Subd., Bo. Bukal, Calamba
LOT 61 - Lot 8, Blk. 3
Lot Area: 240 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 480,000

LOT 62 - Lot 3, Blk. 5
Lot Area: 240 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 480,000

LOT 63 - Lot 1, Blk. 10
Lot Area: 418 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 820,000

LOT 64 - Lot 3, Blk. 10
Lot Area: 300 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 590,000

LOT 65 - Lot 5, Blk. 10
Lot Area: 240 sqm.
Minimum Bid Price: 472,000

BAGUIO CITY
LOT 66 - CONDO RESDL
Floor Area: 115.87 sq. m.
Unit 21-D, Richgate Square II Condominium, Loblolly Pine corner Catmon Cupang, Brgy. Camp 7
Minimum Bid Price: 3,200,000

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Amada 641-4158 641-4159

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PUBLIC NOTICES

ANNOUNCEMENT

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LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late Spouses MARCOS VILLEGAS and SEVERA VILLEGAS has been adjudicated before Notary Public Benjamin Bau,l Jr. of Quezon City per Doc No.65 Page No.13 Book No.I Series of 2005
(PDI Feb.21,28&Mar7,2005)

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late PATRICIA MOLINYAWE has been extrajudicially settled by his heirs before Notary Public Dencio B. Bergas as per Doc 224, Page 45, Book II, Series of 2005.
(PDI - February 21, 28 & March 7, 2005.)

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

Complete Preschool Equipment for sale in Santa Rosa, Laguna

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that the estate of the late PUREZA BORROMEO was extrajudicially settled among her heirs as per Doc. No. 194; page No. 34; Book No. 28; Series of 2004 under notary public Atty. Edgardo Y. Paagas of Cagayan de Oro City
(PDI-Feb. 21, 28 & March 7, 2005)

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LCR FORM 10.1 (LCRO)

Republic of the Philippines
Local Civil Registry Office
Province of Misamis Oriental
Cagayan de Oro City

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

In compliance with Section 5 of R.A. No 9048, a notice is hereby served to the public that EVA O. RAMIREZ has filed with this Office a petition for change of first name from EVA SALVE to EVA in the Certificate of Live Birth of EVA SALVE ONGKIATCO who was born on December 19, 1954 at MANILA CITY and whose parents are RICARDO ONGKIATCO and PEPITA CATERIAL.

Any person adversely affected by said petition may file his written opposition within this office not later than March 11, 2005.

(Sgd.) NORMA S. DIPUTADO
City Civil Registrar

(PDI – March 2 & 7, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
City Government of Zamboanga
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
City Hall, Zamboanga City • Tel. No. (062) 992-7763

SF-GOOD-05

Sol. No. CL-05-03-0100

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The ***City Government of Zamboanga***, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites suppliers/manufacturers/distributors/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Contract	*Location/Office*	*Brief Description*	*Approved Budget for the Contract*	*Contract Duration*	*Delivery Period*
1. Electrical Supplies (Streetlight)	GSO - Stocks	Lu 250, 250 Watts HPS Lamp, Luminaire, etc.	1,846,250.00		20 w.d.
2. Brand-new Motor Vehicles	S.P.	4x4 Double Cab Pick-up	2,436,000.00		20 w.d.
3. Drugs and Medicines Supplies	GSO - Stocks	Ambroxol, Amoxicillin, etc.	3,787,237.00		15 w.d.

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

Name of Contract	*Location/Office*	*Brief Description*	*Approved Budget for the Contract*	*Contract Duration*	*Delivery Period*
4. Security Services	GSO	Security Guards	6,142,500.00		April 1 to Dec. 31, 2005

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last five (5) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding, and have key personnel and equipment (owned, leased or under purchase) available for the prosecution of the project. The list of minimum equipment requirement is indicated in the Eligibility Forms. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid shall be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities are as follows:

BAC Activities	*Schedule*
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	March 8, 2005
2. Pre-bid Conference will be conducted at City Budget Office, City Hall, Zamboanga City	March 10, 2005; 10:00 AM
3. Opening of Bids	March 22, 2005
4. Bid Evaluation	March 22, 2005
5. Post qualification	March 23, 2005
6. Notice of Award	March 30, 2005

Bid Documents will be available only to prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of P700 (Item No. 1), P900 (Item No. 2), P1,200 (Item No. 3) and P1,700 (Item No. 4) to the City Treasurer.

The City Government of Zamboanga assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of their bids.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **VIRGINIA SAN AGUSTIN GARA**
BAC Chairman

(PDI - March 7, 2005)

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- Computer literate

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Tel. Nos. (053) 561-4111 / 255-7211 Telefax (053) 561-4075

INVITATION TO BID

The Leyte V Electric Cooperative, Inc. (LEYECO V), Brgy. San Pablo, Ormoc City, Leyte, invites all eligible suppliers to submit bids for the supply of Line Materials, Hardware and Equipment for the following line expansion projects funded under NEA Subsidy 2004 for 4th Leyte District:

1. Zone 5, Brgy. Talisayan, Albuera
2. Purok 7, Brgy. Concepcion, Ormoc City
3. GK-Rotary, Brgy. Tambulilid, Ormoc City
4. Purok II, Pangpang, Brgy. San Juan, Ormoc City
5. Canduwang, Brgy. Cabaliwan, Merida

Bid documents shall be issued to interested bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Five Hundred Pesos Only (P500.00) starting March 11, 2005.

Pre-bid conference will be held on March 17 at 9 o'clock in the morning at LEYECO V Boardroom, Brgy. San Pablo, Ormoc City.

Sealed bids will be received by the Pre-bids and Awards Committee (PBAC), at LEYECO V Main Office in Brgy. San Pablo, Ormoc City, Leyte on March 31, 2005 at 1:30 in the afternoon, at which time and place said proposals will be opened and read in the presence of bidders or their authorized representatives.

LEYECO V reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, to waive any minor defects or informalities therein and to accept any or all offers or proposals as may be considered most responsive and advantageous to the Cooperative. It assumes no obligation whatsoever for any expenses or loss that may be incurred by the bidder in the preparation of bids, nor does it guarantee that an award will be made.

(Sgd.) JOVENAL R. ALESNA
General Manager

(PDI – March 4, 6 & 7, 2005)

U.P. IN THE VISAYAS TACLOBAN COLLEGE
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Tacloban City
Tel. Nos.: (053) 325-2270 / 325-5108 (telefax)
Website: www.upv.edu.ph

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **UNIVERSITY OF THE PHILIPPINES IN THE VISAYAS TACLOBAN COLLEGE**, through its Bids and Awards Committee (BAC), invites contractors registered with and classified by the Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) to apply for eligibility and if found eligible, to bid for the hereunder contract:

Name of Contract : Construction of the Library Building, UPV Tacloban College
Location : Magsaysay Blvd., Tacloban City
Brief Description : A three (3) storey building with a floor area of 2,115 sq.m.; a concrete structure supported by either isolated or combined footing foundation system covered by pre-painted roofing fixed on a steel roof framing.
Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) : P16,078,254.36
Contract Duration : One Hundred Eighty (180) calendar days

Prospective bidders should possess a valid PCAB License applicable to the contract, have completed a similar contract with a value of at least 50% of the ABC, and have key personnel and equipment (listed in the Eligibility Forms) available for the prosecution of the contract. The BAC will use non-discretionary pass/fail criteria in the Eligibility Check/ Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids. The BAC will conduct post-qualification of the lowest calculated bid.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR).

The schedule of BAC activities is as follows:

BAC Activities	*Schedule (2005)*	*Venue*
1. Receipt from prospective bidders of Letters of Intent (LOI) including Application for Eligibility and Issuance of Eligibility Forms	March 01-14	Prof. Anna A. Arroyo c/o Office of the Dean UPV Tacloban College Tacloban City
2. Deadline: Receipt of Eligibility Requirements	March 21; 9:00 a.m.	
3. Notice of Results of Eligibility Check	March 23	
4. Issuance of Bid Documents	March 28-April 8	
5. Site Inspection	April 13 (a.m.)	
6. Pre-Bid Conference	April 13 (2:00 p.m.)	DM Conf. Rm., 2nd Floor Magsaysay Blvd., Tacloban City
7. Receipt and Opening of Bids	April 27; 9:00 a.m.	

Any changes in the above-stated schedule will be duly announced in a Bid Bulletin. The BAC will issue to prospective bidders. Eligibility Forms at the UPVTC Supply & Property Services Office, Tacloban City, upon their submission of a LOI, and upon their payment of a non-refundable amount of Two Hundred Pesos (P200.00) to the College Cashier. Prospective bidders shall submit the Eligibility Requirements to the BAC at the said address. They may also obtain the results of the Eligibility Check by the BAC at the same address.

The BAC will issue Bidding Documents only to bidders declared by the BAC to be eligible for the bidding upon payment of a non-refundable amount of Nine Thousand Pesos (P9,000.00) to the College Cashier.

The University of the Philippines in the Visayas Tacloban College reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids, to waive any formality in the bids received and to accept such bid which is most advantageous to the University and/or nullify the bidding without giving any reason. The University further assumes no obligation whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expenses or losses that may be incurred in connection with the said bidding.

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **ANNA. A. ARROYO**
BAC Chair

(PDI–Feb. 28 & March 7, 2005)

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that Panasonic Communications Imaging Corporation of the Philippines (PCIP), will cease its business operations effective March 31, 2005. This will be effected through amendment of its Articles of Incorporation shortening its corporate existence. The business, certain assets, liabilities and obligations to the creditors and customers of PCIP as of March 31, 2005 will be transferred/assumed by Panasonic Communications Corporation of the Philippines (PCP) with office address at Lot C3-8 Carmelray Industrial Park II, Special Economic Zone, Calamba, Laguna with telephone nos. 63-49-546-0109/110, 63-49-546-0112, 02-663-7920, fax no. 63-49-546-0111/0189.

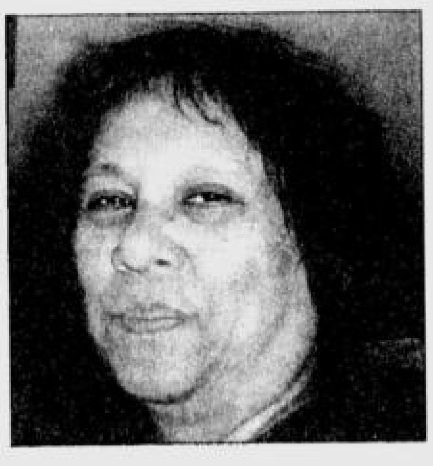
The above decisions were in accordance with the duly adopted resolutions of the Board of Directors and Stockholders of PCIP and PCP in conformity with the business programs of Panasonic Holding (Netherlands) B.V. owner of both corporations, in order to strengthen its global market position and to meet the challenges and the emerging competition in the region.

PANASONIC COMMUNICATIONS IMAGING CORPORATION OF THE PHILIPPINES

(Sgd.) **MAKOTO NAKAMURA**
President and Chairman of the Board of Directors

(PDI–Feb. 28, March 7 & 14, 2005)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



Please be informed that a Warrant of Arrest for the Crime of Estafa has been issued by the Regional Trial Court of Mandaluyong City in Criminal Case No. MC-04-8239 against **Mrs. NILDA ZAPANTA y ELERIA** whose picture appears above.

Kindly convey any information on Mrs. Zapanta's present whereabouts to **Atty. Pedro M. De Leon Jr.**, Rustan Commercial Corporation, Level 21, Enterprise Center Tower 2, 6766 Ayala Avenue cor. Paseo De Roxas Makati City, with Tel. Nos. 885-760 and Fax No. 886-6175. Any information concerning Mrs. Zapanta's whereabouts shall be treated confidentially. Thank you.

(PDI - March 7&13, 2005)

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
PhilHealth Regional Office –IVA
AMCJ Square Bldg., Diversion Road, Brgy. Bocohan, Lucena City
Tel. No. (042) 373-7782

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PhilHealth Regional Office IVA (PRO-IVA) is inviting all interested parties to participate in the re-bidding for one-year security service contract for PRO-IVA offices listed below:

OFFICES	No. of Shifts per Day	No. of guards per day (24-hr period)
Main Office & Storage Bldg. Lucena City	Three (3), eight (8)-hr shift	Seven (7)
Sn. Pablo City, Laguna	Three (3), eight (8)-hr shift	Three (3)
Calamba City, Laguna	Three (3), eight (8)-hr shift	Three (3)
Imus City, Cavite	Three (3), eight (8)-hr shift	Three (3)
Trece Martirez City, Cavite	Three (3), eight (8)-hr shift	Three (3)
TOTAL NO. OF SECURITY GUARDS		Nineteen (19)

Approved Budget: Php2,900,000.00

Eligibility and Bid documents shall be available for issuance at the Administrative Division of PRO-IVA Main Office from **February 28, 2005** to **March 22, 2005**, Monday to Friday, from 8:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M., upon payment of non-refundable fee of One Thousand Pesos (Php1,000.00).

The PRO-BAC shall determine the eligibility of prospective bidder by examining the completeness and appropriateness of their submitted eligibility documents/statements against the checklist of requirements, using the non-discretionary pass/fail criteria.

Pre-bid conference is scheduled on **March 15, 2005 at 9:00 A.M.** while deadline of submission and opening of duly accomplished Eligibility and Bid Documents will be on **March 29, 2005, 9:30 A.M.** both to be held at the Conference Room of PRO-IVA Main Office. The official time clock shall be the wall clock at the Conference Room entrance. Any bidder who comes late will not be entertained.

PRO-IVA BAC reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to abort the bidding process, waive any minor defect/s or informality in the bids received, and to accept the most advantageous bid. Its decision shall be final and binding.

(Sgd.) **MIGUEL T. MACALINAO**
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - Feb. 28 & Mar. 7, 2005)

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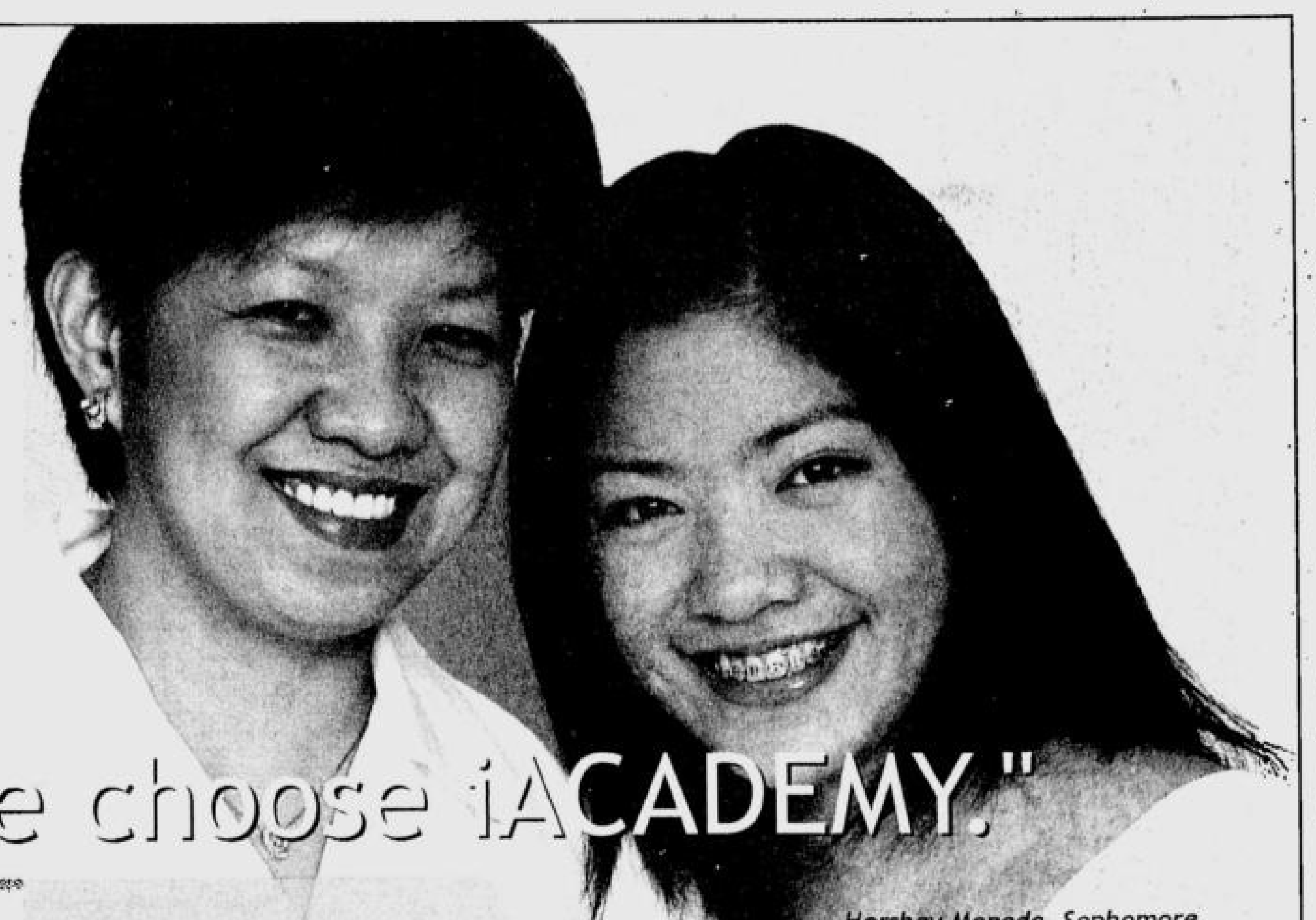

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BUSINESS

Senate VAT bill seeks to cover electric co-ops

By Michelle V. Remo

THE SENATE ways and means committee has come up with a new version of the VAT bill that will require electric cooperatives to pay a value-added tax.

This runs counter to the proposal of the government's economic team, led by the Department of Finance (DOF), to impose a VAT on all the estimated 30,000 cooperatives in the country, which are involved in sectors such as transport, credit and agriculture.

A government source said the Senate committee on ways and means, headed by Sen. Ralph Recto, wanted only the electric cooperatives to pay VAT to complete the "tax chain," from generation to distribution.

If Congress approves the emerging proposal in the Senate, the estimated P5 billion additional annual revenue from the imposition of VAT on co-ops will be reduced to only P1 billion since only the electric cooperatives will be covered, the source said.

The economic team is pinning its hopes on the Senate not passing a watered-down version of the proposal to impose VAT on co-ops.

The Lower House earlier disapproved the plan to have all co-ops covered by VAT.

The Arroyo administration is having difficulty convincing the legislature to approve the proposal to impose VAT on all cooperatives due to strong lobbying by the sector, which said the move was anti-poor.

Various cooperative groups earlier staged a protest action in front of the DOF because of the impending removal of their tax exemptions.

The cooperatives said the Arroyo administration was "making a big mistake" in requiring them to pay VAT, stressing that the move would counter the government's anti-poverty efforts.

The cooperatives said they should not be taxed because their profits do not go to the organizations, but are distributed to members, many of whom belong to poor families.

They insisted that cooperatives should not be treated like ordinary businesses, but recognized as companies engaged in alleviating poverty.

The DOF proposed the lifting of VAT exemption of cooperatives to expand the coverage of the tax and raise revenue for the government.

The Arroyo administration is also pushing for the lifting of VAT exemption enjoyed by other products, such as petroleum, books and services, particularly those rendered by lawyers and doctors.

According to DOF estimates, the government can generate at least P28 billion in additional revenue a year if the proposal to lift VAT exemptions will be approved.

The lifting of VAT exemption is one of the key revenue-raising measures being pushed by the Arroyo administration to help the national government ease its budget woes.

The budget deficit is estimated to reach P180 billion this year.

OPENING DOORS
Tourism Secretary Joseph Ace Durano (right) learns the news from US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone that the US Embassy in Manila will soon open its doors to the Filipino public for scheduled guided tours. According to Durano, he is also pleased to hear that the United States still considers the Philippines "a safe place to visit."

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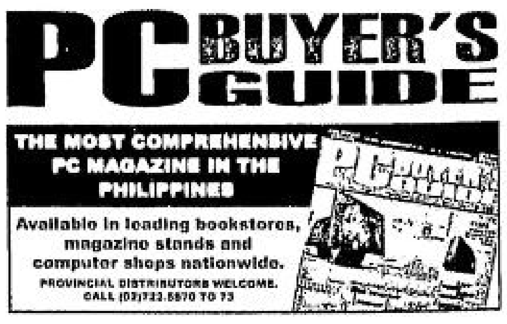

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RP execs lead in use of e-mail

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINES may not be one of the world's centers of technological advances in the Internet, but Filipinos lead the way in using it for their benefit, especially for business purposes.

A global survey among independent business owners found that local entrepreneurs lead their counterparts in other parts of the world in terms of Internet savvy and that local businesses benefited the most by using e-mail and electronic commerce.

According to Grant Thornton—an international membership organization of independent businesses—its 2005 International Business Owners Survey showed that while e-mail was almost universally being used by business owners globally, businessmen in different countries are using e-mail in differing degrees.

Local business owners spend the most time using e-mail at an average of two hours and six minutes, 10 percent longer than their counterparts in better-performing economies such as Hong Kong, India and the United States, who use the e-mail only at an average of two hours a day.

For the 6,000 respondents from 24 countries in Asia, North America, Europe, Africa and Australia/Oceania polled in the autumn of 2004, the overall average was one and a half hours.

At the other end of the spectrum were businessmen in Greece and Russia who e-mailed at a daily average of just 48 minutes.

Grant Thornton said the average time spent on e-mail in Russia was one of the lowest because 15 per cent of business owners there did not have e-mail. Globally, only 2 percent of independent businessmen did not have access to e-mail.

Russia has a generally very low Internet penetration, with only around 5 percent of people having access, the group explained.

However, Grant Thornton said a surprising finding of the study was that 7 percent of business owners in technologically advanced Japan and Taiwan do not use e-mail. In contrast, all of the respondents from Australia, Italy and the United States use e-mail.

Further, the study found that Filipino entrepreneurs benefited the most from e-mail and e-commerce, with 76 percent of them saying the Internet helped most in increasing their revenues.

Others who were most thankful for the Internet were those in India (70 percent), Spain (53 percent), Mexico (42 percent) and Ireland (31 percent).

The French were the most skeptical about the Internet with 61 percent of those polled disagreeing that it help their businesses at all.

The study's other major findings showed that independent businesses around the world take Internet and e-mail security very seriously, with those from The Netherlands, US and Germany being the most careful against viruses and security breaches while those from Taiwan and Russia were most lax.

Also, online advertising and marketing was not yet essential to business owners although those in Turkey and Germany were most dependent on this form of activity.

Further, businesses were generally dependent on the Internet for research with those in Turkey, the Philippines and the US agreeing the most while those in France and Japan disagreed the most.

Still, businesses were generally not dependent on the Internet for ordering supplies or taking orders online but those in the Philippines and Turkey were most dependent on ordering supplies online while those in Turkey and Mexico were most dependent on taking orders online.

E-MAIL AND THE INTERNET HAVE HELPED INCREASE TURNOVER / REVENUE (% BALANCE)

Philippines	76	Russia	11
India	70	Taiwan	8
Spain	53	Greece	8
Mexico	42	Australia	5
Ireland	31	Canada	2
Hong Kong	29	South Africa	0
Turkey	21	Japan	-5
United States	16	Poland	-6
New Zealand	16	Germany	-7
United Kingdom	13	Netherlands	-11
Sweden	12	Italy	-17
Singapore	12	France	-61
Global Average	12		

* THE BALANCE IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THOSE WHO AGREE AND THOSE WHO DISAGREE.

TIME SPENT ACCESSING / RESPONDING TO E-MAIL (HOURS PER DAY)

Philippines	2.1
Hong Kong	2.0
India	2.0
US	2.0
Australia	1.7
Singapore	1.6
Global Average	5
Canada	1.4
Mexico	1.4
South Africa	1.4
Taiwan	1.3
Netherlands	1.2
New Zealand	1.2
Spain	1.2
Sweden	1.2
UK	1.2
Germany	1.1
Ireland	1.1
Italy	1.0
Japan	1.0
France	0.9
Poland	0.9
Turkey	0.9
Greece	0.8
Russia	0.8

SOURCE: GRANT THORNTON INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS OWNERS SURVEY 2005
FIGURES ARE THE AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS PER DAY, INCLUDING THOSE WHO DO NOT HAVE/DEAL WITH E-MAIL, WHO HAVE BEEN ALLOCATED A TIME OF 0 HOURS.

50 YEARS, and counting, for the Bautista family. The patriarch Demetrio (center) is surrounded by his children (seated) John and Jun and daughters Marilou, Cecille and Tess.

Filipino makes good in Chinese-dominated hardware business

FIFTY years ago, Demetrio R. Bautista of Peñaranda, Nueva Ecija, and his wife, Nelly Abesamis Bautista, opened the first Fil-American Hardware store on Rizal Avenue in Sta. Cruz, Manila, breaking the Chinese stranglehold on the business.

The Bautistas were determined to get into the hardware business, even though they were aware that members of the Chinese community dominated the trade.

With only P10,000 and a single employee to help them get started, the Bautistas opened their shop on March 18, 1955, alongside other more established stores that lined the stretch of "Avenida Rizal" all the way to Grace Park in Caloocan.

It took 10 years for the couple's hard work and perseverance to pay off. The Bautistas watched their store prosper and the number of their employees grow before they decided to open a satellite shop also along Avenida.

Demetrio—Teriong to his family and Terry to his business associates—had his big break when Marubeni of Japan authorized him as the sole distributor of Asano White Cement for the entire country.

At that time, no one was manufacturing white cement in the Philippines. When the distributorship landed on Demetrio's lap, his store became a byword in the construction business.

Bautista also made his Fil-American Hardware famous when he won awards from the former National Marketing Corp., a government agency that helped Filipino retailers sell quality products at low prices.

In 1977, the Bautistas decided to put up a building at 923 Aurora Blvd., Cubao, Quezon City. The building now serves as the head office of all the Fil-American Hardware stores that have followed.

In 1978, after 23 years of successful partnership, Bautista lost his wife Nelly. She died at the age of 56.

The blow to Bautista was eased by the presence of his two sons, John and Jun, who by then had joined the business. Bautista's business continued to prosper with the help of his two sons.

Later, his three daughters, Marilou, Cecille and Tess joined the family business, too.

Fil-American Hardware has evolved from a partnership between husband and wife to a full-blown family corporation.

Today, Fil-American Hardware Co. is not just a distributor of Asano White Cement, it has also become one of the leading distributors of prime products like Aalborg White Cement from Malaysia, Makita Power Tools, Bosch Power Tools, LG Power Tools and Boysen Paint.

It is now one of the major suppliers of hardware and construction materials to giant contractors like Leighton Contractors, DMCI Group of Companies, FF Cruz Group, Summa Kumagai, Makati Development Corp., Ayala Land and EEI Construction.

FILIPINO/ B2-2

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* Based on R.L. Polk statistics purchase numbers from 1991-2004
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Building a case for a national ID

MAPping THE FUTURE

Renato C. Valencia

WITH the recent bombings in Metro Manila, the national ID issue has, once again, taken center stage.

Three fundamental questions readily come to mind regarding a national ID system: (1) Can it prevent terror? (2) Can privacy and human rights be protected? (3) What is its economic justification?

Those who are against a national ID would argue that historically, no ID system, national or otherwise, has prevented terror. They would probably say the US 9/11 attacks, the Bali and Jakarta Marriot bombings, and the Madrid train station blasts happened despite existing national or social security ID systems.

They, of course, conveniently fail to mention that (1) in most cases, there was failure in the ID system, meaning, the terrorists managed to use fake IDs; and (2) through the fake IDs, the terrorists were able to acquire the resources and weapons to sow terror.

It is also a fact that to date, no ID system in the world, even in most developed countries, can claim to be tamper-proof and protected against fake IDs. No wonder, the American Civil Liberties Union or ACLU claim that a national ID will not solve the problem inspiring it, which is terror, and that terrorists will continue to obtain travel documents legally or illegally, despite what they call "gee-whiz technology."

Fortunately for humanity, technology has, in recent years, ushered in the use of biometrics, which together with a reliable database, could make the issuance and use of fake IDs much more difficult.

Biometrics operates on the principle that no two beings are alike and, therefore, each one has a unique identification, be it DNA, fingerprint, iris, voice, or any other distinguishing feature.

For example, a national ID, with biometrics and backed up by a reliable database, could be made a prerequisite for the acquisition or use of potential weapons of terror, such as explosives, arms and ammunitions, vehicles, etc., as well as for covered transactions under the anti-money laundering law.

No doubt, a reliable national ID system can hamper the operations of terrorists in any country and help prevent or minimize their evil deeds.

Privacy and human rights

ACLU's other major concerns are: (1) a centralized citizens' database could be used for surveillance and monitoring of citizens by governments, and (2) the national ID could be used as an "internal passport" to curtail citizen movement and harass or discriminate against citizens, especially the handicapped or the minorities.

Let us address these concerns one by one.

To protect privacy, citizen databases, much like bank accounts, can remain in separate databanks in separate institutions, accessible only by the citizen owning the information, and through the use of the national ID with a personal identification number (PIN).

An exception to the rule would be third party access authorized by a court.

To protect human rights, our Congress can legislate that no national ID shall be used to deprive our citizens, especially the disadvantaged and the minorities, of their basic human rights, as well as access to basic government services. They can also impose sanctions on those who use it to curtail freedom of movement or assembly.

Economic justification

A major concern is the cost of issuing a reliable national ID, roughly estimated at about $8/card or higher, depending on the required features, and $500 per card reader.

Thus, a national ID system for the country could cost roughly $656 million for cards ($8 x 82 million), and say, $75 million for readers ($500 x 1,500 municipalities x 100 units/municipality), or a hefty sum of about $732 million (or P40 billion) in capital expenditures alone, excluding the telecommunications and maintenance costs.

One could settle for an ordinary plastic card without biometrics, which would probably cost 1/10th of this amount, or about P4 billion. The cost remains challenging, but its reliability is nowhere near that of an ID with biometrics.

Certain developments in technology and in the marketplace, however, indicate that in the very near future, national IDs could very well be issued inexpensively to citizens:

For one, following Moore's Law, chips are getting cheaper while becoming more powerful. For example, a 64 kb chip, using Radio Frequency Identification or RFID for contactless smart cards (as a platform for national ID) could now cost as low as $1, given a certain volume. Ditto for the cost of biometrics.

For another, the national ID could ride on (or be contained in) cash cards (stored value cards) or debit cards, which have become popular and viable since the boom in pre-paid cards for mobile phones, especially in developing countries where consumer credit is scarce.

Moreover, a reliable national ID could be used as company or subdivision/community ID for a modest annual subscription fee, thus creating a business model that could generate revenues to cover its cost of investment and provide reasonable returns.

Travel, entitlements and e-Commerce

Terror has caused nations, especially its victims, to be very strict at airports and borders, thus slowing down travel and migration. Now, there are proposals to subject goods to the same scrutiny, which, of course, will slow down commerce and trade.

Contact-less ID for people and RFID tags for goods could certainly reduce queues in airports and seaports and speed up movement of people and goods worldwide.

On the domestic side, a national ID could speed up processes in government offices and reduce queues in entrances and exits of company premises, malls, subdivisions and other places where an ID is a requirement.

A contact-less national ID could also facilitate entitlements, welfare, and emergency assistance, as well as prevent assistance from going to the undeserving.

Conceivably, the same national ID could be used for high speed Internet transactions for purchases of goods, services and securities/stocks/bonds, access to live and canned news and entertainment, and introduce the citizen to a whole new world of electronic and mobile commerce.

This should spur electronic commerce, which has not reached its full potential here and abroad due to high levels of frauds and credit card charge-backs.

Conclusion

The national ID's time has come.

A reliable, affordable, contact-less national ID with biometrics and reliable database should help prevent terror, speed up (not slow down) travel and commerce, and spur the growth of electronic and mobile commerce, with the citizens firmly in control, not only of their human rights and privacy, but of their dignity and destiny as well.

(This article reflects the personal opinion of the author and does not reflect the official stand of the Management Association of the Philippines. The author is member of MAP and vice chair of Asia Pacific Network Holdings Inc.. The MAP secretariat and the author may be reached via map@globenet.com.ph)

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Filipino makes good . . .

From page B2-1

It has also become one of the leading suppliers of various government agencies. Aside from having a branch in Baesa, Quezon City, it has also opened outlets for power tools in two prestigious malls in Metro Manila like the Bosch Shop in Edsa Shangrila Mall and the Tools Specialist at the Festival Mall in Alabang.

After 50 years, Bautista, now 86, has turned over the reins to his eldest son, John. He, his wife and children have gone on to sustain what Bautista had started.

Bautista's other children also have businesses of their own.

Jun, his second son, also owns a hardware store, Asia Pacific Builders, which he runs together with his wife, Cheryl.

Marilou, the third child, works with husband Pablo in running Espa-Fil Import Export, trading Spanish wine, olive oil and other Spanish products.

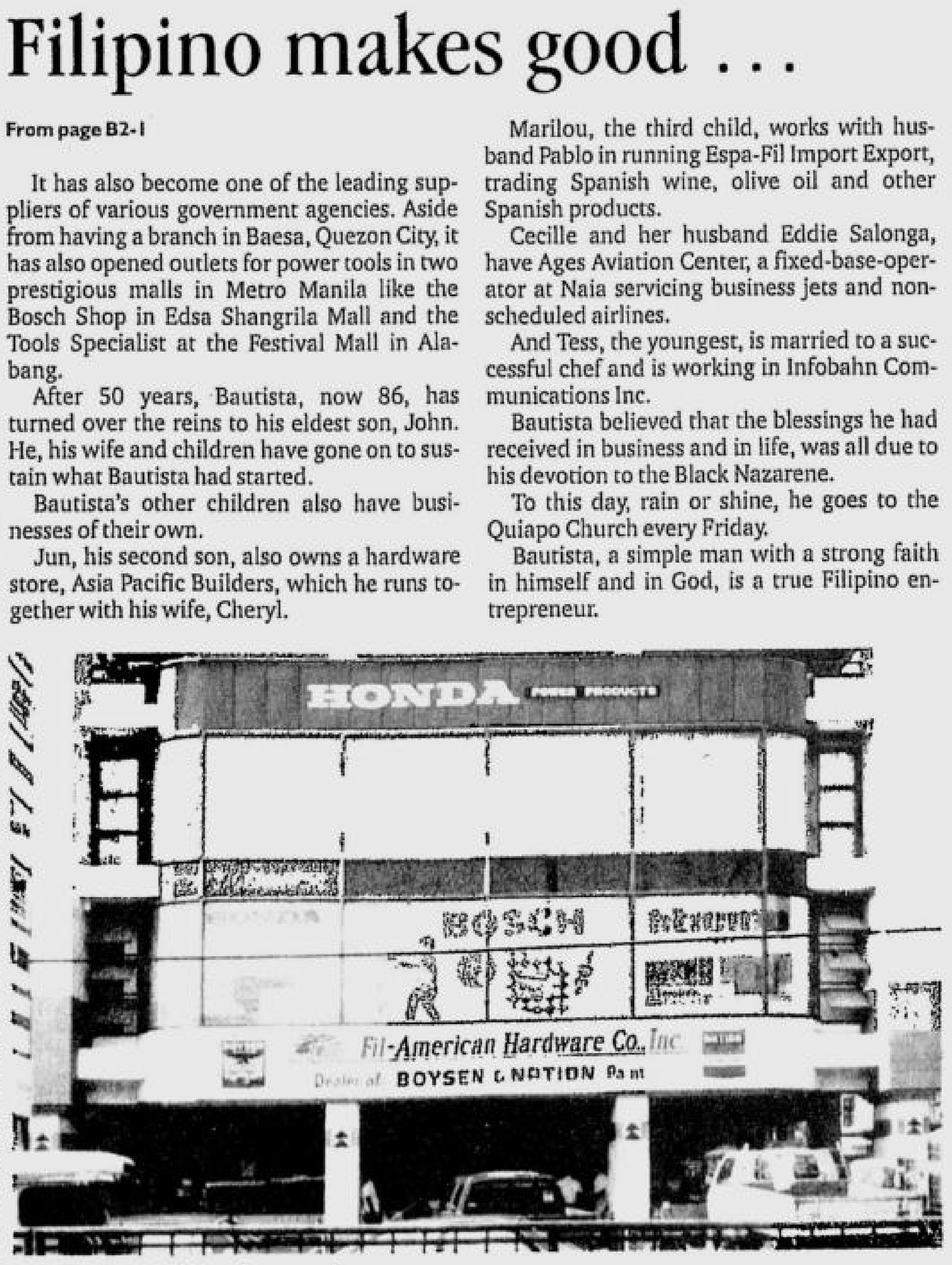
Cecille and her husband Eddie Salonga, have Ages Aviation Center, a fixed-base-operator at Naia servicing business jets and non-scheduled airlines.

And Tess, the youngest, is married to a successful chef and is working in Infobahn Communications Inc.

Bautista believed that the blessings he had received in business and in life, was all due to his devotion to the Black Nazarene.

To this day, rain or shine, he goes to the Quiapo Church every Friday.

Bautista, a simple man with a strong faith in himself and in God, is a true Filipino entrepreneur.



THE LANDMARK hardware today

Why not change?

A LEADER'S WAY

John C. Maxwell

HAVE you ever met someone who wasn't happy unless he or she was going through some kind of massive change? Perhaps there are a few individuals in this world who thrive on uncertainty, enjoy feeling insecure, and love to have their routines disrupted.

But I think it would be safe to say that most people resist change every now and then, especially when it affects an idea, position, or practice that is near and dear to them.

Although people in leadership roles are often called upon to be agents of change, I have found that leaders resist change as much as followers do! As you might guess, that poses a big problem in this world of rapid transition and constant flux.

As I wrote in my book, "Developing the Leader Within You," "Unchanged leaders equals unchanged organizations."

My goal in this column is not to teach you how to enact change or tell you when you need to change. I merely want to help you understand what most people—including many leaders—think about change.

Here are six key observations:

1. Most people change just enough to get away from their problems, not enough to solve them. They change just enough to escape; and as soon as they escape, they say, "I'm OK now—I don't have to do anything else." Unfortunately, this is like painting a rusty car. Sooner or later, the paint wears off, and the rust has only gotten worse.

2. Most people want to change their circumstances to improve their lives instead of changing themselves to improve their circumstances.

Let's say you came to me, as leaders often do, and said, "John, give me some leadership ideas so I can change the people of my organization." Well, I'm happy to offer leadership advice, but not so you can change someone else. If I give you advice, I'd like it to change you, because if I can change you, your organization will change, too. As I'm fond of saying, "People do what people see."

3. Most people do the same thing the same way and expect different results. I see it happen all the time: People keep doing the same thing the same way, and yet they expect something to get better. When you want something you've never had, you have to do something you've never done.

4. Most people are willing to change, not because they see the light, but because they feel the heat. Read this carefully. As a leader, you better change when you see the light because if you wait and change when you feel the heat, it's too late. Leaders go first. I know-sometimes we don't want to go first, especially when it comes to change. But we have to—that's what it means to lead.

5. Most people are unwilling to pay the immediate price of change; therefore, they do not change and pay the ultimate price. Change is uncomfortable. It's unsettling. Sometimes, it's downright painful. But in the long run, the alternative is often much, much worse.

6. Most people see change as a hurtful thing that must be done, instead of a helpful thing that should be done. Not all change is good. Some changes are based on bad ideas. Others are self-serving to the people who enact them. But as Max De Pree said, "We cannot become what we need to be by remaining what we are."

Did you see yourself in any of these six observations? If so, decide today to change the way you think about change. Why is this so important? I stated the answer in Developing the Leader Within You: "When change is successful, you will look back at it and call it growth."

Send your comments or questions to Dr Maxwell c/o slvguru@pldtDSL.net

Fashion invades brands

TALK about fashion is no longer limited to the rooms of designers and clothing experts. It has also become a hot topic in boardrooms and marketing conferences.

The fashion industry now wields such influence that it has invaded the ranks of accessories and high-tech gadgets that are out to be different from their competitors.

Corporate brands, thus, know that for them to compete, they must be on top of the fashion trends. And, if possible, be part of the fashion industry itself.

A good marketing strategy involves having the best kind of exposure for the brand.

This demands that these brands be presented in the best light and shown to possess the elements of stature and desirability to capture and maintain the attention of the target market.

Examples of how fashion is married into brands are shown during Fashion Week, the world's biggest fashion event.

A brainchild of the Council of Fashion Designers in America and Europe, Fashion Week was created in the early '90s to centralize and solidify American and European collections in the interest of offering exposure to the global fashion industry.

Its extensive series of shows and special events feature only the most promising designers and labels on the market.

The successful events in London, Milan, Paris and New York inspired local versions in other cities.

In addition to the fashion capitals, Fashion Week is now held annually in Toronto, Brazil, India, Tokyo, Hong Kong, Singapore, Beijing, Australia, New Zealand and the Philippines.

Simon Lock of the Australian Fashion Week says that the idea has opened doors for homegrown designers, who have little or no access to the international wholesale markets, to showcase their wares, boost their countries' own fashion industry and entice the big boys from overseas to get a load of what they have to offer.

OLYMPUS partnered with interior designer Thom Filicia of "Queer Eye for the Straight Guy" to bring the brand to life.

MOET et Chandon on the red carpet

This focus on fashion allows Fashion Week to capitalize on its immense marketing potential.

As Fern Mallis, executive director of the 7th on Sixth, says on the value of the International Fashion Week: "I've done thousands of shows all over the world and I do believe that IMG and FDCI have done a good job, providing the opportunity and an elevated platform for a burgeoning industry."

Each Fashion Week is literally a convention of buyers, local and international journalists and fashion editors from 32 countries. This inevitably leads to tremendous benefits in terms of media mileage.

It's no wonder that Fashion Week consistently produces a long list of brand participants. Ultra HD gave New York fashion mavens high-definition, up to the minute coverage of every single fashion show in its Ultra HD Fashion Lounge, stocked with its super sleek televisions.

LG Collin's mobile phone made its debut at Fashion Week, offering a techie-powered dose of style and sophistication and proving that even gadgets can become amazing fashion accessories.

Evian Natural Spring Water hosted daily forums on beauty secrets during Olympus Fashion Weeks, hosting talks from various celebrity exports on how best to include Evian in one's beauty and health regimes.

It isn't just a matter of passive participation. Leading brands the world over have successfully joined international fashion weeks, promoting their products to people with style, substance and plenty of spending power.

Fashion Week is the only way to go when it comes to massive marketing. It doesn't get more high profile than this.

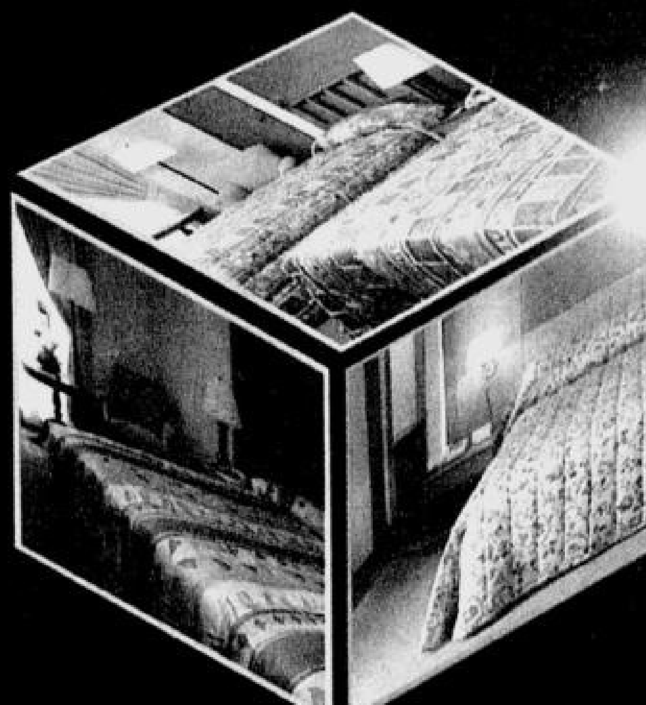
Sta. Lucia, Araneta, PJA ink deal

STA. LUCIA Realty Development Inc. and Araneta Properties Inc. signed an agreement with the Philippine Judges Association (PJA), an association of 900 Regional Trial Court judges, to develop a 20-hectare Judiciary Village in Colinas Verdes in San Jose Del Monte City, Bulacan.

Colinas Verdes, an exclusive golf and residential community, is a half-hour drive from Metro Manila, with amenities that include an 18-hole championship golf course, country club and pockets of residential villages and commercial areas.

A five-kilometer drive from SM Fairview toward the Novaliches watershed, Colinas Verdes can be accessed through the main points along the widened Quirino Highway on the west and Gregorio Araneta Avenue on the east.

The Judiciary Village, as with Colina Verdes, will be part of an urban township development project that falls within the Araneta Estate as planned by new urbanist firm Duany Platter and Zyberk of Florida and its local counterpart PROS.



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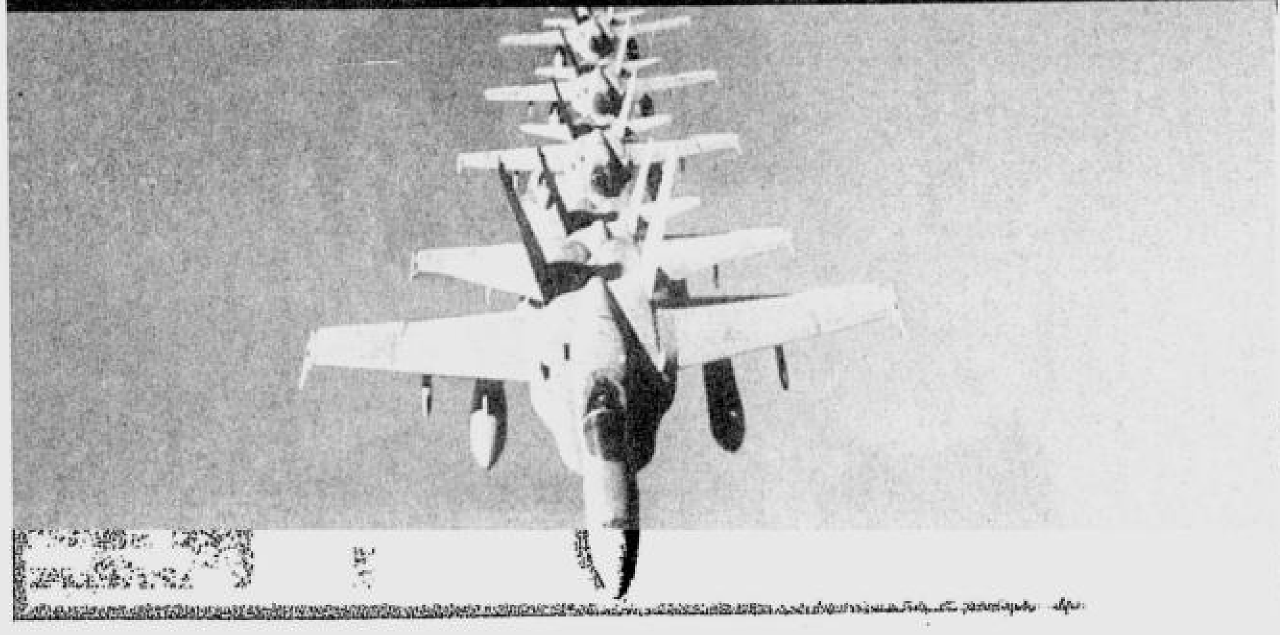

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Jollibee opens 500th store: Proud to Bee Filipino,

MALACAÑAN PALACE
MANILA

My warmest congratulations to the stockholders, management and staff of **Jollibee Foods Corporation** on the *Opening of your 500th Store.*

This phenomenal achievement bears out Jollibee's continued vitality and entrenches you further as the most dominant fastfood company in the country for many years to come. It is a tribute to your commitment to service and adherence to excellence in all aspects of your operations.

By opening your 500th store in Basilan, you affirm all the efforts we have been doing to create a climate conducive to business in the area. It signals greater development in the vicinity as, indeed, each Jollibee store is a purveyor of business activity.

The Philippines is experiencing economic growth because of the contribution of local companies such as Jollibee in revenue generation and the creation of job opportunities for our people. May this be a start of many more store openings in the future of Mindanao. May you continue to make the Filipino proud and remain our partner in fostering a resurgent Philippine economy.

Again, congratulations and *Mabuhay kayong lahat!*

Gloria Arroyo
GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO

TEN-POINT AGENDA TO "BEAT THE ODDS" IN SIX YEARS UNDER THE ARROYO ADMINISTRATION

"BEAT THE ODDS - this will be our battle cry and agenda for the next six years"

--President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo

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E - Education for all
A - Automated elections
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T - Terminate the MILF and NPA conflicts
H - Heal the wounds of EDSA
E - Electricity and water for all barangays

O - Opportunities for 10 million jobs
D - Decongest Metro Manila
DS - Develop Clark and Subic

REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES

Senate

Warmest greetings to Jollibee as you open your 500th store in Basilan.

It is heartening to note that from Jollibee's humble beginnings in 1978, with a team of six staff, it has grown to be one of our country's leaders in the fastfood service industry, employing more than 40,000 nationwide. Over it's twenty-seven years of existence, Jollibee has proven it's leadership and competitiveness by constantly giving consumers more reasons to enjoy its tasteful products and friendly service. The success that Jollibee now reaps is a testimony to years of hard work and unending commitment to the Filipino people.

Reminiscent of your contributions to the society and economy as a whole, allow me to congratulate you on the opening of your 500th store in Basilan. This is not only an addition to your numerous milestones in pursuit of corporate excellence, but also proof of your commitment to nation building by opening opportunities to the people of Basilan. I am one with your initiatives in developing affirmative action plans to complement the resources of the region. I hope that this effort brings forth collaboration among investors, entrepreneurs and economic and civic players to pave the way for over-all competitiveness necessary for growth in the region.

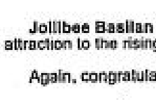
Jollibee's growth, progress and prosperity attest to what a Filipino company can achieve through hard work, determination and forward-looking business outlook, a sense of purpose and mission, and a deep commitment to outstanding customer service. Your success story should serve as a glowing inspiration to other aspiring Filipino enterprises in various fields and service as a reaffirmation that indeed, the Filipino has what it takes to make it in any endeavor.

To Jollibee, my sincere congratulations and best wishes for continuing success.

Mabuhay!

MAR Roxas
Senator

Republic of the Philippines
OFFICE OF THE PROVINCIAL GOVERNOR
Capitol Bldg. Isabela City, Basilan Province



Congratulations to the people of Basilan and commendation to Jollibee Foods Corporation in its service to the Basileños and the Isabeleños in particular.

We are indeed grateful for your courage to invest millions of pesos which serve as show-window of peace and progress in this part of the province.

Jollibee Basilan is not only a food chain but can be considered as an attraction to the rising city that will motivate and encourge investors.

Again, congratulations and mabuhay!

WAHAB M. AKBAR
Governor

JFC donates P10 Million to DSWD Calamity Fund

Building Communities - The Heart of Social Responsibility

Food on the table and a roof overhead. For Jollibee, that's just part of being neighborly, of being a good corporate citizen, of giving back to every community in which Jollibee is found.

Through its ***Pabahay Pambuhay Program*** in October 2000, Jollibee Foods Corporation (JFC) has raised funds from the customers, employees and suppliers to buy building materials. Jollibee's employees also donated their time and sweat to help build some 20 homes alongside Habitat for Humanity partners and volunteers in Talon Uno, Las Piñas.

January of 2002 when Jollibee launched its ***"Nurture the Future" Supplementary Feeding Program***. A collaborative venture with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD), Department of Health (DOH), and the Kabisig ng Kalahi Foundation. The program has helped over 1,500 kids in 12 communities nationwide.

In December 2004, JFC also ***made a donation of P10 Million to the DSWD Calamity Fund*** to help thousands of homeless families affected by typhoons and other natural disasters.

Whatever way Jollibee chooses to help, our purpose is to positively impact the lives of many.

Raising Future Champs

Jollibee believes in the Filipino youth. That's why we establish and support programs for the well-being and character development of children.

Past youth-building program, ***Sabi ng Jollibee: Kaya Mo, Kid!***, imparted positive Filipino values to children such as taking responsibility, respect for elders, thoughtfulness, love of country and much more.

Through ***MaAga ang Pasko sa Jollibee*** – the longest-running annual toy and book drive in the country – Jollibee helps teach children the value of sharing. The program has made Christmas much brighter for over 600,000 kids in 10 years.

The company's campaign for values formation took a more significant turn through ***Jollibee Kids Learn***, a values education program that is integrated into the curriculum for 1st and 2nd graders. It is currently being included in 50 public schools, helping over 290,000 elementary students in the National Capital Region (NCR).

Jollibee Kids Read, conducted in cooperation with *Sa Aklat Sisikat Foundation*, teaches the extraordinary joy and love of reading to children. In the last three years, Jollibee has donated over 34,000 carefully selected books to over 100 schools around the country. ***Jollibee Kids Read*** and ***Jollibee Kids Learn*** are co-sponsored by the Department of Education.

With a wellspring of support and positive feedback from schools, teachers, parents and students, Jollibee will continue to embark on meaningful endeavors.

The Jollibee
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testing to ensure satisfaction

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The Filipino

Filipinos have made their
big bite of the *langhap-sar*
Jollibee, Filipinos have ma
clear winner – both in numb
market share – outperformin
efforts of the brand's bigge
competitors.

Tony Tan Caktiong, Jollibee founder and CEO, and other Jollibee executives, pay a courtesy call to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang with Senator Mar Roxas as special guest.

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ommissary: A World-Class mitment to Quality

On six hectares of land in Canlubang, Laguna lies the Jollibee commissary – the largest, most modern food processing facility in the country.

This P1.5 Billion, ISO/HACCP certified mega structure with state-of-the-art equipment, cutting edge technology and highly skilled personnel, has the capacity to serve over 800 stores.

This building is not only where billions of *langhap-sarap* treats are made. This is a symbol of our immense and solid commitment to bring our customers world class standards.

s of Customer Satisfaction

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A Triumph of and for the Filipino

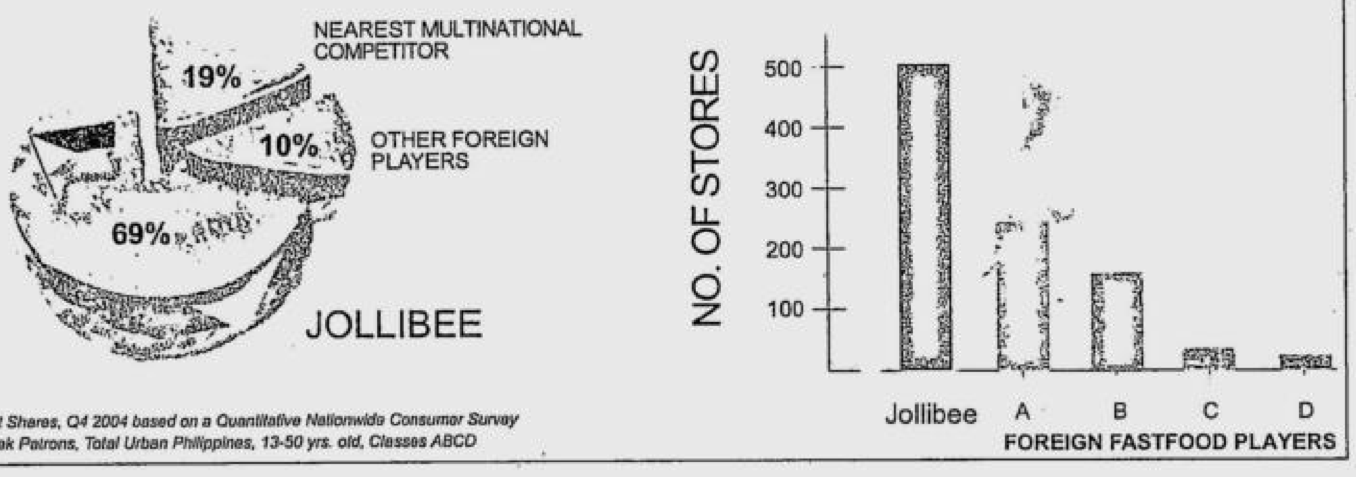
Tony Tan Caktiong as 2004 World Entrepreneur Of The Year

Who would have thought that two small stores would grow to have 500 branches? That a Filipino fastfood chain would become Number One, beat US-based giants, and garner a multitude of honors for the Philippines? To name a few:

- The Most Admired Company in the Philippines by the Review 200 of the Far Eastern Economic Review, now Asian Wall Street Journal 200, for 7 consecutive years (1998-2004)
- Ranked No. 3 Overall Regional Best-Managed Companies by Market Capitalization for 2004 - Asia Money Magazine
- Recognized as one of the "Top 20 Best Employers in Asia" and the No. 1 in the Philippines by Hewitt Associates and the Asian Wall Street Journal in 2001.

With two stores over 25 years ago, all these were probably just a dream for Tony Tan Caktiong, hailed as Management Man of the Year 2003 by Management Association of the Philippines, and the prestigious World Entrepreneur Of The Year 2004 by Ernst & Young.

2004 Comparative Market Performance:
Jollibee vs. Multinational Burger and Chicken Houses



Source: Last Visit Shares, Q4 2004 based on a Quantitative Nationwide Consumer Survey
Base: Past-4 Week Patrons, Total Urban Philippines, 13-50 yrs. old, Classes ABCD

From humble bee-ginnings...

1975

The Cubao Magnolia Ice Cream House opens, later becomes the first Jollibee store

1978

Incorporation of Jollibee Foods Corporation

1980

Chickenjoy is hatched

1984

The Champ is launched

1985

Jollibee becomes #1 fastfood chain in the Philippines

1987

Jollibee opens in Brunei – its first store overseas

1991

Jollibee opens its 100th store in Davao Bolton

1993

Jollibee becomes hot investment with an IPO

1996

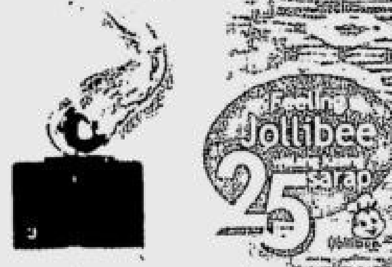
Jollibee opens its 200th store in Malolos, Bulacan

1998

Jollibee opens its 300th store in Balagtas, Bulacan and its first in Daly City, USA

2001

Jollibee opens its 400th store in historic Muralla, Intramuros



2003

Jollibee's 25th Anniversary;

The brand receives Pilak Award, citing its advertising as one of the best-loved and true Pinoy classic

2004

Jollibee opens its 500th store in Basilan

BASILAN 500th Jollibee

Proud to Bee in Basilan

llibee's EVP and COO, Ernesto Tanmantiong, esents PGMA with a silver vinta to symbolize llibee's arrival on Basilan shores.

Opening of the Jollibee store in Isabela City, Basilan

Guests look on as a priest and imam bless the new store in Basilan.

"It's a sign of progress."

That's how a Basilan resident sums up what the new Jollibee store means to his province. But to us, our 500th store is another "thank you" to our *kababayans* who continue to make us number one. Each new store brings us closer to more and more Filipinos whom we love to serve with the superior taste and quality they deserve. This commitment to serve more Filipinos is the message we took to President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo in a courtesy call in Malacañang. Tony Tan Caktiong, Jollibee founder and Chief Executive Officer, along with our managing directors, franchisees and other executives were on hand to make the pledge.

500 Jollibee stores. That's more than the number of outlets of all the foreign fastfood franchises combined. But our dream doesn't end there. As Jollibee Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Ernesto Tanmantiong said, "Our aim is to make Jollibee as well-known as any brand in the world. We want Filipinos to be known and admired as business leaders at par, if not better, than his counterparts worldwide. Because, indeed, the Filipino can." So we dream on, and push on.

"Hatid namin ang sarap at saya dahil sa inyong walang sawang pagsuporta. Maraming salamat po!"

Jollibee celebrates the Basilan store opening with the kids of the Isabela East Central Elementary School Dance Troupe in their Yakan costumes

Dito sa Jollibee, bida ang saya!

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Jo [illegible] ibee

Ngayon, may 500 stores sa buong bansa na naghahatid ng sarap at saya.

Dito sa Jollibee, bida ang saya!

Kabahagi ang Coca-Cola sa isang matunog na pagbati sa pagbubukas ng ika-500 Jollibee Store sa Basilan. Kasama ka.

Coca-Cola

[illegible]

Young soap company looks for market niche

By Myrna Rodriguez-Co
UP ISSI

GOYA Cacnio Tanedo's entrepreneurial story is not yet a success story. Far from it. She is, in her own words, a struggling businesswoman in need of a lot of breaks and assistance.

Her struggles have made her a woman not so much desperate as driven.

Goya has recently developed an herbal soap collection through painstaking research and development, market tested it with flying colors. Yet, she has not moved on to full-blown distribution and marketing. Her products remain home-made and handcrafted.

Her drive comes from knowing she has a "good and efficacious product" in her hands that has attracted a devoted but small following. On the other hand, her desperation arises from not knowing how to distribute and market it widely.

The soap line has many variants: papaya supreme and papaya green scrub for skin whitening and moisturizing, anti-aging for the elderly, hair plus for scalp and dandruff treatment, whitewash for infant, sensitive and asthmatic skin, milk and oats for anti-allergy, and so many more.

Lately, she has developed aromatherapy oil with essential oils and other natural ingredients which, according to Goya, can ease body aches and fight infections and various disorders.

Her HealthMaster Enterprises, producer of aromatherapy and herbal soaps and oils, under the brand name G Naturals, is, however, underfinanced, underequipped, undermanned. It is in fact, still largely a one-woman show. Since it began two years ago, production has been based in Goya's kitchen at Kamias Road, Quezon City.

Dime a dozen

Goya's venture into soap making seemed to "just happen."

In 1997, she was one of the almost a-dime-a-dozen proprietors of skin care clinics in Metro Manila.

Like most other skin care clinics, her Goya's Glamour Secrets was also selling, on the side, soaps and other beauty care products like astringents, toners, and facial and body creams supplied by different manufacturers.

Not all of the products satisfied her customers then. It also bothered Goya that many of the products were chemical based and therefore might endanger the health of users over the long term. The suppliers also did not deliver the products on time.

Papaya Supreme
White Wash
Anti-Ageing
Hair

TANEDO makes the G Naturals soap line in her kitchen.

Her solution to the problem was to make her own.

Her first step was to take formal courses in soap making at Technology Livelihood and Resource Center (TLRC). She supplemented this with literature research, R&D including product development, pilot tests and market tests.

It took her almost a year to perfect her products, focusing on health and therapeutic effects. She had to adjust the formulae, the color, the consistency, and later the packaging. But the results were worth it, she says.

G Natural soap's competitive edge is in the use of plant oils, rather than chemicals, as base. Her materials include lavender oil, eucalyptus, bergamot, chamomile, lemon grass, olive oil, ylang-ylang oil, most of which Goya gets from abroad.

Pilot marketing

"I had a small captive pilot market," she says.

She refers to clients who frequent her skin care clinic's two branches at Kamias Road, Quezon City and at San Fernando, Pampanga and who were persuaded to try the soaps.

They came back almost incredulous, reporting good results.

She cites a number of clients who earlier tried the most expensive and imported anti-dandruff treatments to no avail and who were stunned to see how their hair and scalp responded to Goya's hairplus soap variant.

Her marketing was initially by word of mouth. A customer, usually a client in her clinic, would generate more customers among her circle of friends and who in turn spread the word further, and so on. Many send the products to their relatives and friends in the United States and Japan.

"Some of them get as many as 200 pieces of the soap per order," Goya says.

Soon, Goya had her own informal network of distributors that mostly did direct selling.

But an enterprising Filipina based in the United States used a better strategy. She applied for exclusive distributorship of the products in the American West Coast. She also set up a website to sell Goya's soap, among other products, under her own label, HerbalWonders.

This kind of arrangement is known as toll manufacturing. Goya is open to more arrangements like this.

Her line of soap is also available at retail outlets like Hi Top Supermarket in Quezon City, Adam's Boutique in Greenhills, and NepoMart in Angeles, Pampanga.

Wanted: More market exposure

At the UP Institute for Small-Scale Industries where she sought help, Goya was apprised of what she can do for starters to improve her business, pending a comprehensive operations audit.

She was advised to improve her labeling and packaging, to review her product costing and thence her pricing.

She listened and is now in the process of making the changes.

She was apprised about market niching. Once she identified the niche—which seemed to be the upscale segment—she should concentrate on this.

She was told that when the new dealers and sellers come with increased market exposure, she should get herself ready for them. She is preparing sample kits for these marketing partners. But more than this, she knows that she needs to increase her production capacity and assure consistent product quality.

She wonders aloud whether she would qualify for a small business loan or attract strategic partners and financiers.

(Check out the start your own business and improve your business training programs at the University of the Philippines Institute for Small-Scale Industries by contacting Tel. 928-7076 to 79 or info.issi@up.edu.ph or visiting www.up.edu.ph/~issi.)

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FROM left: Habitat for Humanity Philippines president Alberto Jugo, Makati Development Corp. president Emilio Tumbocon, and Habitat Philippines chair Francisco I. Ferrer discuss the site development plan of the Payatas Ecology Village made possible by the property donation of the Doña Consuelo "Chito" Madrigal Foundation.

ECOVILLE PROJECT

Help for Payatas keeps on coming

By Marlet D. Salazar

AFTER the tragedy that befell Payatas in 2000, where hundreds were killed and injured when the mountain of garbage collapsed and shattered the slum community, help poured in to assist the families start their lives over again.

The sad event saw the government, nongovernment organizations and private companies join hands in improving the quality of life of the Payatas residents.

Numerous kinds of assistance were extended, from livelihood to outreach programs.

These were done either by established institutions or collaborative efforts by ordinary citizens who wanted to help.

Five years since the tragedy, help and relief efforts still keep on coming, in the hope that the residents, especially the children, could look forward to a better future.

Community reborn

One such help is the Payatas Ecoville project.

Having lived in shanties or makeshift homes just to have a roof over their heads for most of their lives, these families will soon have a chance to live in decent houses they can call their own.

With the almost eight-hectare land donated by the Consuelo "Chito" Madrigal Foundation (CCMF), residents will soon have their address at Payatas Ecology Village or Payatas Ecoville.

Ecoville will redefine the idea of living by the Payatas residents as it is envisioned to be a real and interactive community.

Plans for a school, church, community center and various recreational facilities are included in the master plan.

Future homeowners will have a chance to work for their houses.

Aside from paying at no-interest terms, family members will take part in building the houses themselves, as part of Habitat for Humanity's idea of rendering sweat equity.

CCMF partnered with Habitat for the construction of the houses.

Restoring dignity

"The Payatas Ecoville is our attempt to restore to the less privileged and less fortunate their human dignity and self-respect through self-reliance," Doña Chito Madrigal said during the signing of the memorandum of agreement on March 3 at the Quezon City Hall.

"We envision a model community where we will relocate, house, educate and promote livelihood to the residents living along the Payatas dumpsite," she said.

Madrigal chose Habitat as CCMF's partner because of the organizations' shared belief in empowering the poor.

"I believe in the concept of getting the beneficiaries to work for their homes," she said.

"Habitat's vision is aligned with my principle of not giving things for free, but rather allowing them to build and pay for their own homes, and thus help Habitat spread the benefit to other beneficiaries," she added.

Thorough selection

Families will have to undergo a thorough selection, which will be done by the Payatas parish.

Fr. Aldrin Suanne will lead the selection, values formation, and introduction of residents to other intangible areas of community development.

More than 500 families are estimated to benefit from the project.

"We hope to create self-reliant people who are capable of shaping a better world for themselves and others," Madrigal said.

Ayala Land Inc. (ALI) will lead the site development plans, while Makati Development Corp., its construction subsidiary, will be the engineering consultant in charge of preparing the civil works.

Fernando Zobel de Ayala, chair of ALI said: "I hope that through this project we can uplift the lives of these families, provide them the dignity of a decent home and create a model community in Payatas."

Zobel is also a member of Habitat for Humanity International's board of directors. He also encouraged businesses to take part in this endeavor.

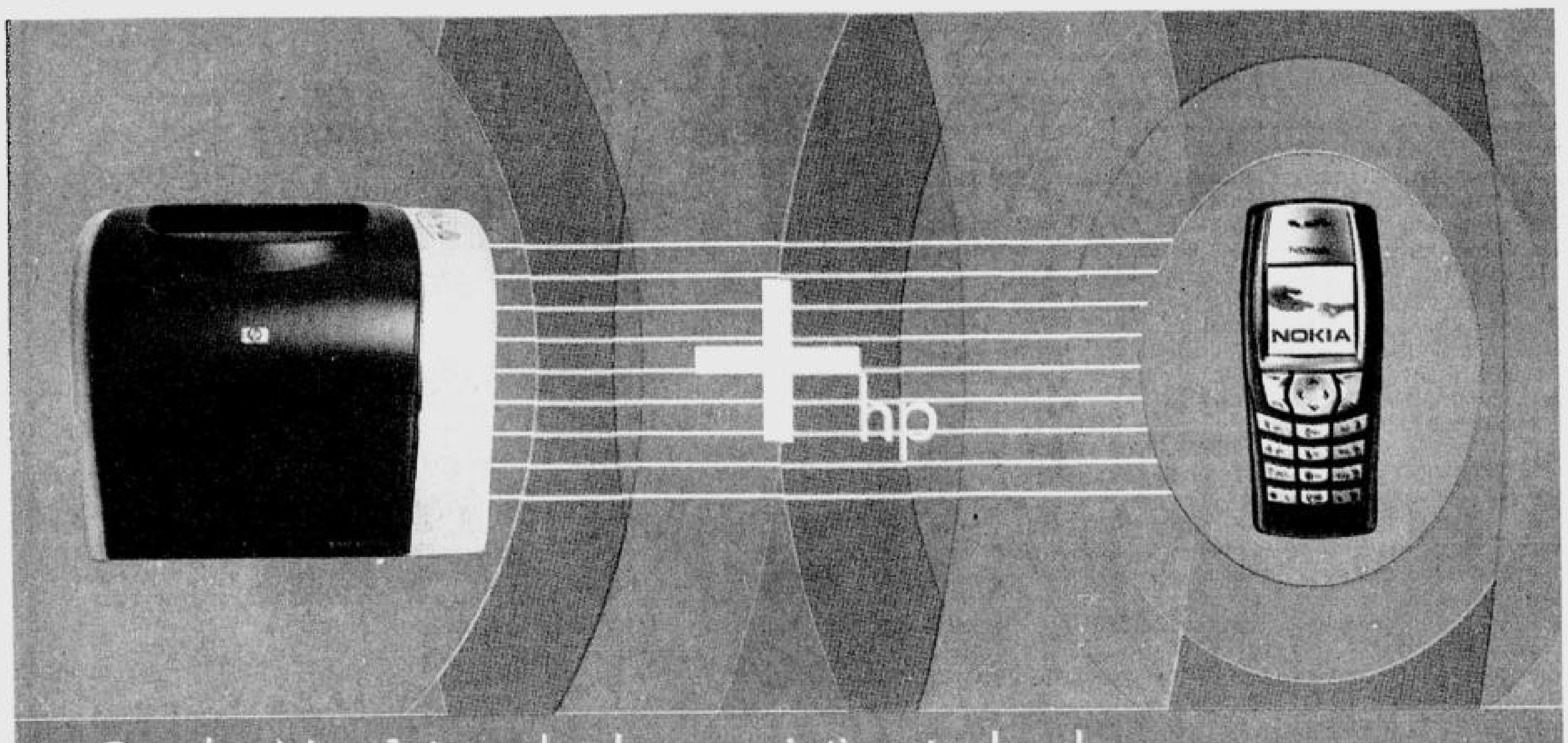
Habitat for Humanity Philippines chair Francis Ferrer said: "Once the site development is completed, Habitat will seek donations and volunteers to help build houses in Payatas Ecoville."

The Quezon City government has promised to build the roads and a school and provide livelihood programs for the families.

The effort would also give them the chance to start their lives and seek other means of living aside from the dumpsite.

"I hope that other people with idle property in Quezon City will also look deep into their hearts and see how they can help the less privileged," said Mayor Sonny Belmonte.

"The donation of land from the Madrigals opens a new dimension in our partnership with private individuals and corporations who are willing to help and provide fresh hope for the poor families," he said.



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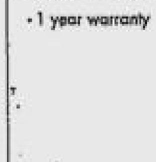

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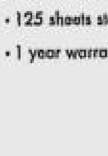

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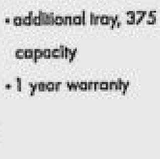

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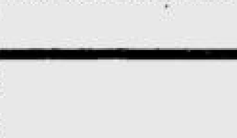

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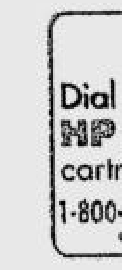

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Filipino-run firm out to clean mining industry

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

MINING is, literally, a dirty business.

In the extraction of metals, tons of ore are processed to come up with mere grams of valuable metals, such as gold, copper, nickel or silver.

The rest of the ore is kept in tailings dams to prevent the toxic material from seeping into the water systems, the surrounding land, or escaping into the atmosphere.

It is a costly venture for mining companies to clean this waste, with the bill running to the millions of dollars.

But an American company led by a Filipino has pioneered a technology that will not only clean this waste at a very minimal cost, but also extract more metals from the discarded material.

Lawrence Asuncion, president of California-based Industrial Services Group, told Business Monday that the group spent some $15 million over the past five years to perfect the technology of cleaning up the metallic waste produced by mining and steel manufacturing operations.

Chief scientist

Leading the technical team behind what the group termed "re-mining" is Eduardo Sacris, former executive vice president of Benguet Corp., who has over 34 years of experience in the metals and mining industry.

Sacris used to manage the day-to-day mining operations of Benguet and directed the activities of over 6,000 miners and engineers.

Under ISG's process that Sacris help develop, the mine tailings are reprocessed to separate the material into three: calcium silica or glass, zinc, and base metals like iron.

All three can be sold in the open market.

ISG reprocesses the material at no cost to the mining company.

It gets its return on investment from the sale of the separated material, particularly zinc, and the metals, such as iron.

Asuncion said ISG tested its technology on the waste produced by one of the biggest mining companies in America, and the reprocessed materials passed the United States' environmental safety standards.

He is now bent on bringing the technology to the Philippines to help Filipino mining firms clean up their waste.

Asuncion said that despite being away from the Philippines for over 20 years, he felt he had an obligation to lend a hand to the Philippines, especially after interest picked up following the Supreme Court ruling allowing foreign companies to invest.

"The Philippines is not really on the list of our priority destinations, because we are now testing material from mining operations all over the world," he said.

"But as a Filipino, my main motivation is to bring the technology here," he added.

ISG is set to open a representative office here, headed by Kenneth Shaw and John de Jesus, which will take samples of mine waste from local mines for testing in the US.

Bright prospects

Asuncion said he was proud of the fact that a Filipino holds the position of chief scientist in the company, which sees bright prospects in the waste processing market.

"We were already doing some research and experimentation before. But when Mr. Sacris came on board, he made a lot of breakthroughs that shortened our research and development process," he said.

Asuncion said ISG was founded in 1999 to solve the growing menace of mine and steel waste, which was considered the most expensive to clean.

After landing its first contract with the American mining firm, it is now processing mine waste from some of the biggest names in the industry, and is confident it will be able to duplicate its re-mining results.

Asuncion said he decided to come on board because he believed in the vision of sustainable development espoused by the other members of the ISG team.

One of the company's co-founders is Richard Wiewiorka, ISG vice chairman who founded Presidio Organic Sciences, a company specializing in the reuse of waste.

He also chairs Lead USA, an affiliate of Lead International, a global program founded by the Rockefeller Foundation to develop leaders in the area of sustainable development.

Also on board is Walter Kolbe, ISG chair and chief executive officer, who founded the Environmental Protection Company, which helps in the environmental management programs of companies such as American Oil Co. and Union Oil of California.

Leap of faith

Asuncion, on the other hand, was living comfortably off the proceeds of his insurance business.

It was in insurance and estate planning where he made a name for himself after he left the Philippines in 1984.

Prior to that, he was in charge of the airport services operation of the Philippine Airlines.

He said he left because he did not want to be an employee all his life, and that the opportunities were in the United States.

After learning all about the insurance business from his sister, he immediately struck some deals in California.

In just one month, he earned two years' worth of his salary at PAL.

He said he was approached by ISG to help raise start-up capital.

He was reluctant at first, because the technology seemed to good to be true.

But as soon as he was convinced that the company could indeed bring the results it promised, he came on board.

Charity work

He also cut his salary in the process, but he relishes the fact that he is now part of a company that is out to help others.

"I also told them that one of my conditions was that we would put aside a part of the money for charity work. I told them to support me on this. That was my deal," Asuncion said.

It was not hard to convince the other founders as the group made it a policy to put half of their personal profit back into the communities they will operate in.

For the Philippines, he said his plan was to help channel money to start potable water projects, as it is a basic need that has sadly not reached all Filipinos.

"I know that not one person can do it, but at least I can take one more step forward," Asuncion said.

FOR ASUNCION, it's time to give back to RP

"BPI FAMILY SAVINGS BANK played an important role in the success of Fisherman's Grill. If not for their SME Business Loans, we would have not been able to grow our family business."

Eddie Tiongson
Owner, Fisherman's Grill

BPI FAMILY SAVINGS BANK RELATES THE HUMBLE BEGINNINGS OF FISHERMAN'S GRILL.

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Fisherman's Grill is the family's pride and joy. Established by Mr. Eddie Tiongson in 1991, this Kapampangan restaurant became the talk of the town for serving dishes that satisfy the Pinoy palette. All was going well for the Tiongsons until Mt. Pinatubo erupted in 1991. Rainfall caused a massive lahar flow in 1995, which buried their restaurant. This incident didn't dishearten the family. In 1997, Eddie re-opened Fisherman's Grill in San Agustin, Pampanga. Unfortunately, the restaurant was destroyed by fire.

A year later, Fisherman's Grill rose from the ashes. Now, with the help of son Ian, Eddie re-opened the business again in a 2-storey building in San Fernando, Pampanga and has continued to serve delicious Pinoy favorites to this day.

This would have not been possible without the help of BPI Family Savings Bank's SME Business Loans. Through SME Business Loans, they were able to add a third floor to their existing restaurant. Truly, success doesn't come without pain. But if you have a reliable partner like BPI Family Savings Bank, you'll surely go a long way.

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BPI FAMILY SAVINGS BANK

What's up with Power-up? 'Amazing Race,' that's what

LAST YEAR, producers of the hit television show, "The Amazing Race," came knocking on the door of Power-Up gym.

The owners of Power-Up are the same husband-and-wife team behind the Mojo line of sandals—Joey and Molly Cuerdo.

The couple opened the door for the "Amazing Race," which went on to film their stunts in the country.

Power-up edged out a German technical rigging outfit based in Cebu to become Amazing Race's technical consultant for its Southeast Asian leg.

Power-Up also provided the marshals who maintained order during the show's second episode in El Nido, Palawan.

The Power-Up crew had to put up a 300-foot-high hanging platform from where the contestants had to ascend by rope to find the clues.

Richárd Hall, country manager of Amazing Race, commended Power-Up for its excellent services.

It was in the 1990s when the couple and their mountaineering friends decided to place stones on the back wall of the UP main library. They only wanted to polish their rock-climbing skills.

Once again they drew crowds raring for challenges.

On Oct. 4, 1994, the Cuerdos put up Power-up, to let people experience the thrill of rock climbing.

Branches soon sprouted in Tandang Sora, Alabang (Olympic Village), Parañaque and Pasig.

Ever innovative, Joey and Molly had a 30-foot mountain replica built in Pampanga to provide a different experience for sports climbers.

"The opening would be on March 18," says Joey. "I'm sure people will enjoy a different kind of thrill." *Senen Bravo*

TEENERS line up to experience the thrill of rock climbing at Power-Up—something the owners are only too happy to oblige.

Taking risks is good for. . .

From page B3-4

PERRYER

ed and respected.

Intercultural differences often pose a barrier to successful offshore operations.

The elements cited reflect how people from a particular culture interact with foreigners, handle transactions, execute contracts and close deals.

Technological risks

Not all countries can afford to house and support technological innovations.

It is sometimes a disadvantage, and a source of frustration for the investor, when its target host country lacks infrastructure or the local technical skills to support the business' systems.

So what do you do?

According to Perryer, after identifying the different risks you may encounter, the next step is to draw up risk minimization strategies.

Managing Risks

Perryer identified several techniques that companies may find useful:

(1) **Do your homework.** Do your research. Look at the host country's history, economic data and current events. It pays to know beforehand who or what you're dealing with.

(2) **Try to understand host culture.** Perryer said you are not expected to master everything overnight.

But the effort to blend in the crowd will pay off, especially in countries that are highly sensitive when it comes to culture and religion.

For a business to thrive in these kind of communities, it must be sensitive to the local way of life.

(3) **Share the risk.** Perryer suggested equity sharing. Through this scheme, governments of host countries will also have a stake in your company (even a minor one). Thus, any action, policy or law enforced by the government that is unfavorable to your business, will also be detrimental to them.

(4) **Localize operations.** Perryer explained that the company must be involved with local businesses, as well as its people. Doing so will give the locals a sense that you're not just out to make a fast buck.

(5) **Develop contingency plans—lots of them.** It pays to be prepared. Drawing up such plans will enable the company to counter any setbacks with minimized losses.

Again, while a healthy dose of risk-taking may prove to be an advantage to companies, it is better to gauge the gravity of the risk you are taking.

As a last piece of advice, Perryer told firms, especially the small- and medium-sized ones planning to go offshore: "Start small. Increase volume only when issues like production capacity, shipping, sales and cash flow become more certain."

Well-
gets a

By Senen Bravo

TREKS to the mountai
the company of UP M
taineers (UPM) durin
late 1980s had taught
Cuerdo, 34, and wife M
35, a valuable lesson: A
wear a comfortable pa
sandals.

"Most of my buddies i
UPM complained that th
made Teva sandal lack
ladder lock, which can b
justed to comfort the
says Joey, who has gone
create his own line of san

In 1991, without any
rience in sandal-making
door enthusiasts Joey
then girlfriend Molly
their hands in creating
dals, which they teste
rough terrain.

When it was time to
ten their sandals, they d
ed to call it Mojo.

"Mojo is Molly and
name combined," says
"At the time, we were
mistic our creation w
take us to a higher groun

Joey and his friends w
meet at 4 p.m. at the
wing of the UP main libra
work on the sandals.

"We started to draw
lookers and, eventually
tential customers, whil
were making the san
says Joey. "The fad w
soon grip the UP campus

Joey spent P250 to c
his first pair of sandals

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heeled sports couple kick out of sandals

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he sensed the need for a better pair, so he went to Marikina and found the shop which worked on his specifications.

"We met this shoemaker, showed him the Teva brand and instructed him to create our own version," says Joey. "The catch is: He had no background in sandal-making."

The couple raised the needed capital from friends and eventually collected P20,000.

Excited, Joey then went on to handle the production side of the business, while Molly took on the marketing part. Joey scoured Divisoria for materials, such as marking pencils, thread, needles and sewing machine oil.

Molly also called on their friends in the mountaineering community.

Their friends would then go on a trek and later provide the couple with details on how effective the sandals were.

Joey and Molly came up with six pairs, which they tested for arc support, ankle triangle and bone-foot-friendly buckles.

They would later churn out 50 pairs. These would soon find their way to the UP shopping center. After a week, they followed this up with the sale of another 80 to 100 pairs.

"Our sights were still trained on UP," according to Joey. Yet he said he was hoping that the sandals would become a hot item.

Island Spice and Athlete's Gym and Dive were Mojo's first distributors outside UP Diliman.

Sharing the passion for the outdoors since high school, Joey joined the UP Mountaineers in 1988. Molly followed suit a year later.

Molly has been teaching sports climbing in UP Diliman for three years.

Joey said that the first pairs of Mojo sandals cost P185, as against Teva's P1,500—an edge the couple would take advantage of.

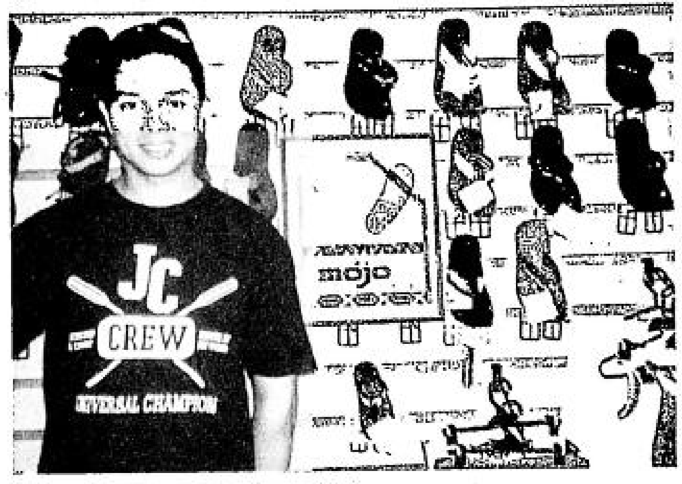
Barely in their early 20s, the couple started reaping the rewards of their efforts in 1993.

In the early '90s, they distributed their products in Cebu, Tacloban and Bacolod. Mojo sandals also hit the shops in Davao and Cagayan.

Mojo has now become a byword in the local scene. At one point, the couple discovered that several shops in Pasay Cartimar were selling fake Mojo sandals. Joey complained to the owners. But no legal action was taken.

Joey and Molly are now firming up their hold on the business. Recently, they hired a designer, who came up with five designs to boost the look and feel of their Mojos.

For the mountaineering couple, everything seems to be falling into place.



JOEY Cuerdo and his line of Mojos. JANE BRAVO

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BUSINESS *Monday*

What public services can be privatized?

By Dennis M. Arroyo
Contributor

MUCH of the blame for the fiscal crisis hounding the Philippine economy has been pinned on government corporations.

The common rule was for state firms to sell their services at cost recovery, with little or no margin for profit. However, precisely because they were government firms, they came under public pressure.

People would take to the streets to prevent them from hiking their fees to the correct levels. Politicians, being sensitive to public opinion, would ask or arm-twist the executives not to raise their rates. The bottom line was that the fees they charged could not keep up with their costs.

The giant firms bled heavily, so the state had come in to prop up their finances.

Funds meant to directly serve the poor (e.g. for public elementary schools) would end up drained, subsidizing instead the electricity of everyone—the poor, the middle class, and the rich. And yes, the bleeding forced the state to borrow even, swelling its debt.

The sorry story—seen not only here but in many other countries—led to a change of strategy. It would be better to sell losing state enterprises to the private sector. Stop the bleeding. Subject the white elephants to the discipline of the market. Set them free to charge the correct prices. Privatize.

But would the private sector buy these ailing firms? A useful guide is a review done by the World Bank on the marketability of various public infrastructure services. See the World Bank Development Report, Infrastructure for Development, 1994.

The analysis looked into the potential for competition, the characteristics of the goods, and the potential for cost recovery. The greater the potentials for competition and cost recovery, the more marketable were the services.

The study assigned a grade of 3 for most marketable and 1 for least marketable. The most marketable were long distance telephone services, waste collection, ports and airport services, rail freight and passenger services, and thermal power generation. The least marketable were rural roads.

Here is the table from that study, cited in the textbook Economics by Gerardo Sicat:

Marketability Index for Different Public Infrastructure Services

Telecommunications	
Local services	2.3
Long distance	3
Power/gas	
Thermal generation	2.6
Transmission	2.4
Distribution	2.4
Gas production/ distribution	3
Transport services	
Railbed and stations	2
Rail freight and passenger services	2.6
Urban bus	2.4
Urban rail	2.4
Rural roads	1
Primary and secondary roads	2.4
Urban roads	1.8
Port and airport facilities	2
Port and airport services	2.6
Water	
Urban piped water networks	2
Nonpiped systems	2.4
Sanitation	
Piped sewage treatment	1.8
Condominal sewage	2
On-site disposal	2.4
Garbage Collection	2.8
Sanitary disposal	2
Irrigation	
Primary and secondary networks	2.4
Tertiary (on farm)	1.4

Source: World Bank Development Report, Infrastructure for Development, 1994. Cited in Gerardo Sicat, Economics, 2003 edition.

Comments to darroyo@philonline.com

Taking risks is good for firms' health

By Amy R. Remo

ANY BUSINESS venture is already a gamble in itself. But going international seems even more so.

The prospect is intimidating and poses huge financial risks. But potential rewards are equally huge.

The key to taking advantage of these potentially-rewarding ventures, thus, is to make calculated—not reckless—risks.

In the recently-held lecture series dubbed "Managing Risk In International Business Operations," Dr. Chris Perryer of the University of Western Australia talked about the types of risks that companies face, as well as risk minimization strategies.

Sponsored by the Australian Institute for Higher Education, UWA's partner in delivering its Graduate School of Management MBA program in Manila, the lecture is the fourth in a series of free seminars.

According to Perryer, director of the GSM MBA, there are no hard and fast rules or simple answers that apply to all cases.

Perryer identified four general types of risks: political, economic, technological and social.

Political risk

In some countries, government and politics play a very crucial role in the company's success. In some extreme cases, it's either you play by their rules or you're out of the game.

Perryer, thus, warned companies of some of the most common political risk elements:

- Form of government.

Identify the host country's type of government (democratic, parliament or communist) as this will somehow indicate its receptiveness to foreign businesses.

- Political instability and level of terrorism

Check the country's overall political climate.

- Foreign policies, tariffs and trade barriers, and legal system

Are the laws and policies mandated by the host country fair and favorable for investment? Are foreign businesses given equal impartial security and protection?

Economic risks

One of the most important aspects to look into when choosing a country to invest in, is its economic stability.

Perryer stressed the importance of looking at the country's economic indicators such as gross national product (GNP), monetary and fiscal policies, as well as foreign investments and international financial standing.

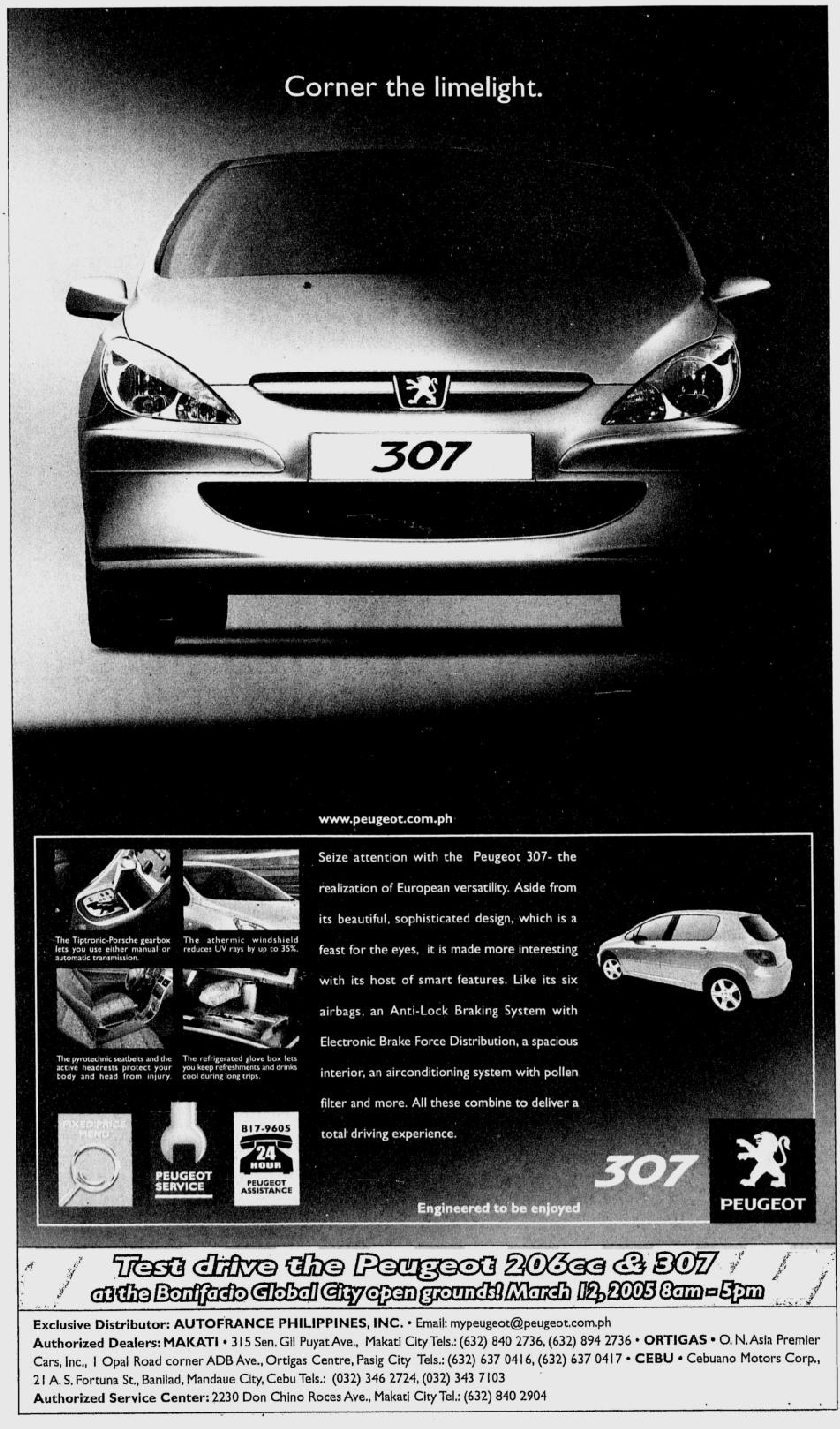
As a potential investor, these indicators provide clues and evidence of whether the business will thrive.

One of the most common economic risk events, according to Perryer, is the abrupt changes (by the government) in domestic monetary or fiscal policies.

Social Risks

Offending a country's cultural and religious sensibilities can spell disaster for a company, especially in a country where social values, tradition and religion are highly regard-

TAKING/B3-3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A voyeur's ballet, anyone?

CLARK Rambuyon, Ciag Gaongen and Jojo Mamangun in Alden Lugnasin's choreography of "Buhat" and "Lahat ng Araw"

By Joyce C. Abaño

A COLLABORATION of great Filipino music and original Ballet-Philippines dance choreography is set to enthrall music-and-dance enthusiasts in BP's final offering this season.

The two-night event will be on March 11 and 12 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines at 8 p.m.

BP's "Neo Filipino: Playing Maestro Ryan" will feature a number of contemporary dances choreographed to complement Ryan Cayabyab's 2004 bestseller album "Great Filipino Love Songs," and his new orchestration of Philippine folk songs "Songs of the Islands."

Both compilations will be performed by the San Miguel Philharmonic Orchestra.

"When Ballet Philippines approached me to ask if they could dance 'The Great Filipino Love Songs' I recorded with the orchestra, I said 'Sure, and why don't we push it further by collaborating and performing the music live with the orchestra to make it more exciting?'," Cayabyab said in an interview.

"I also let them listen to this CD which I was working on; reconstruction or rearrangements of Filipino folk songs like "Atin Cu Pung Singsing," "Sarumbanggi," "Usahay," "Si Filimon"... *katatapos pa lang* and I let them listen to it, and they wanted to do it also," he added.

According to the composer, this collaboration with Ballet Philippines was also prompted by his desire to promote and preserve Filipino music.

"*Marami na rin tayong mga bata na hindi alam yung mga* folk songs *natin*. So, hopefully, by making it more accessible, danceable and popular, *maririnig 'to ng bagong* generation of Filipinos. We will be doing it live with the orchestra and with a dance *pa*," Cayabyab said.

BP artistic director Augustus Damian III said this presentation would have a distinctive style to capture the audience's attention and make them a part of the evening's production.

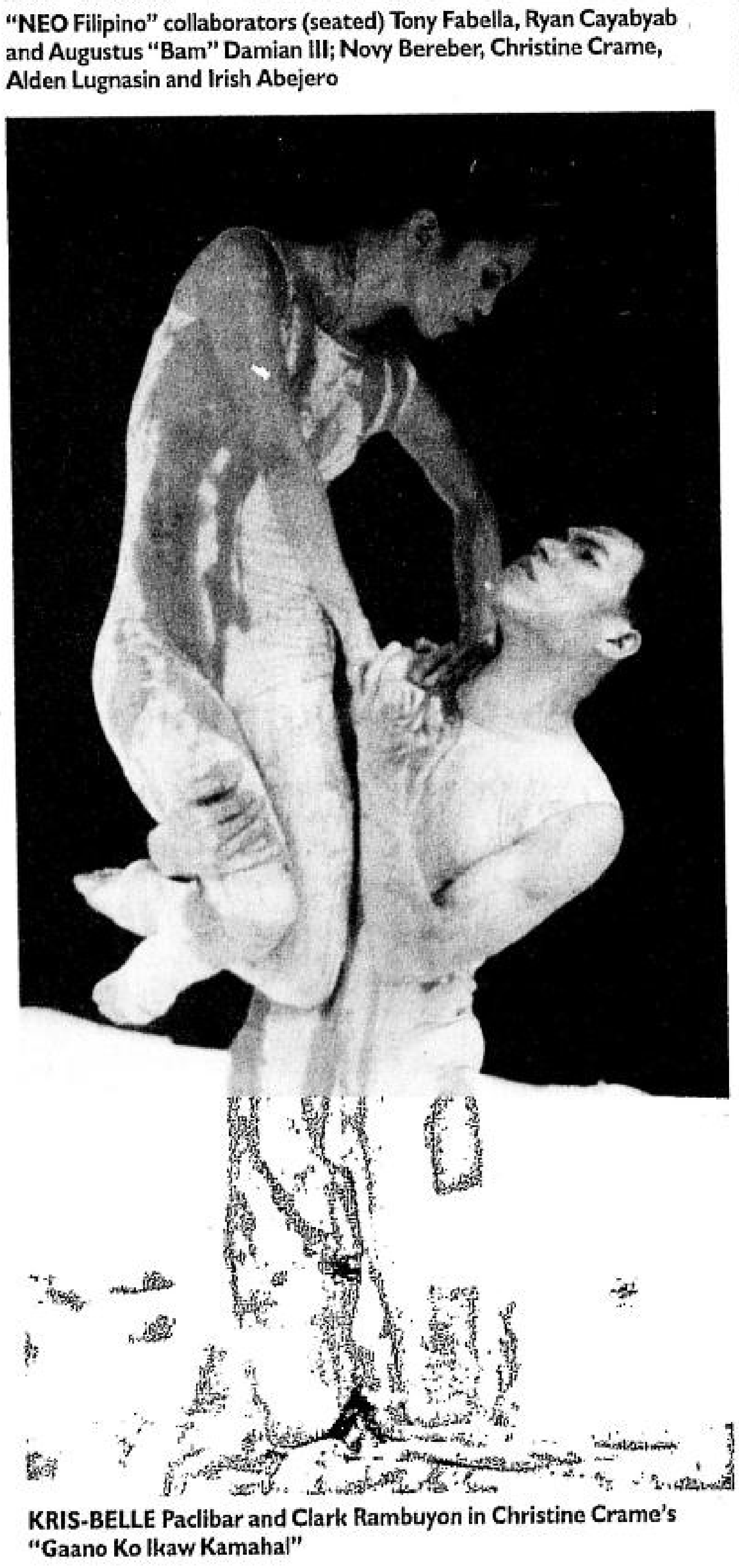
"Part of the look of the show is voyeuristic. You will see the dancers putting their makeup on, the technicians moving everything... with this, the public becomes part of the entire show. It will look a little bit like somebody's looking through a keyhole while the dancers are dressing up," he said.

The choreography of the 13 tracks in the "Great Filipino Love Songs" and the 11 tracks of the "Philippine Folk Songs" is divided among Damian, Tony Fabella, Alden Lugnasin, Christine Crame, Irish Abejero and Novy Bereber.

As BP closes its 35th season, Damian invites everyone to this two-night-only presentation. "This is art. Whether good or bad, it can add something to your life, to your knowledge of things, to your appreciation of things. And you can always like it or dislike it. But if you don't make an effort of going, it won't make a difference in your life. So go and watch the show."

For tickets, call 5511003 or 5510221.

"NEO Filipino" collaborators (seated) Tony Fabella, Ryan Cayabyab and Augustus "Bam" Damian III; Novy Bereber, Christine Crame, Alden Lugnasin and Irish Abejero


KRIS-BELLE Paclibar and Clark Rambuyon in Christine Crame's "Gaano Ko Ikaw Kamahal"

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How is Philippine literature doing?

A CCP forum shows literature is evolving beyond books

By Amadís Ma. Guerrero
Contributor

FREE Press Literary editor Paolo Manalo; young poet Angelo V. Suarez of the Thomasian Writers Guild and poet-teacher Nerrissa Guevarra of UST

WHAT IS the state of Philippine literature? This question was posed to panelists at a recent regular forum of the Cultural Center of the Philippines, titled "Sining Taktakan," for students.

"Depends on the university," countered poet Nerissa Guevarra. "For us (in the University of Santo Tomas), it is in a good state, in good shape, definitely in good shape. Writers are coming out with books, inspiring their students. Young writers are coming out. And as you know, there was oral literature even before written literature. The *babaylans*..."

The other panelists were Angelo V. Suarez of the Thomasian Writers Guild; Paolo Manalo, literary editor of the Free Press magazine, and "alternative" writer Libay Linsangan Cantor. Facilitator was Ed Cabagnot of CCP.

The idea of literature should not be confined to books, Manalo indicated. And Suarez expounded on this: "*Maraming mapapansin* (you can see a lot of this). For example, we take slogans for granted. You can see it in the jeepneys." This is also literature, he indicated.

"As in 'Hudas Not Pay,'" intoned Cabagnot. And he then asked the young members of the audience what books they read, or if they read at all. If so, what medium, English or Filipino?

THE AUTHOR with some students

ED Cabagnot of CCP Media Arts Division

One student said English made for more exciting reading. Another said she read in both languages—Taglish. A third student stood up and said she reads either in English and Filipino but "it has to be interesting and to add to our knowledge (*dagdag sa kaalaman namin*). *Pero* (TV) quiz show *gusto rin*!"

Visual

The panelists noted that the world is becoming more and more visual. The new generation of writers has to adapt to markets, and to reach out somehow in a new way. Philippine literature in various languages is in the Net, and writers—as the recent PEN Conference was told—now avail of high technology to write, criticize and improve one another's stories, and the stories of their students as well.

And Sid Hildawa called attention to the habitués of café society who read literary collections.

"They're reading us," he said. "There's this café in Ortigas... they're reading our poems."

A student from Misamis Oriental, however, called attention to the lack of access to literature in her province. There are libraries there (the capital city of Cagayan de Oro is quite developed) but, she indicated, these do not encourage the borrowing of books. It was only when she came to Manila that she became aware of Philippine literature.

A mother who was in the audience injected a cheerful note when she said she has two teenage children who read a lot, and who want to be creative writers.

The consensus of the forum was that literature is not just confined to books and libraries, and that it will continue to evolve. As one resource person put it, "I'm not worried about Philippine literature. Literature can never die." The next Sining Taktakan will be in July, when schools reopen.

New focus on Rizal

By Christine Godinez-Ortega
Contributor

JOSÉ Rizal, considered a Sleeping Hero in many parts of this country, gets a new focus in "The Native Sky: Studies in the Life and Writings of Jose Rizal" (Office of Research and Publications, Ateneo de Manila University, 2004, 195 pages), Fr. Miguel Bernad's 21st book.

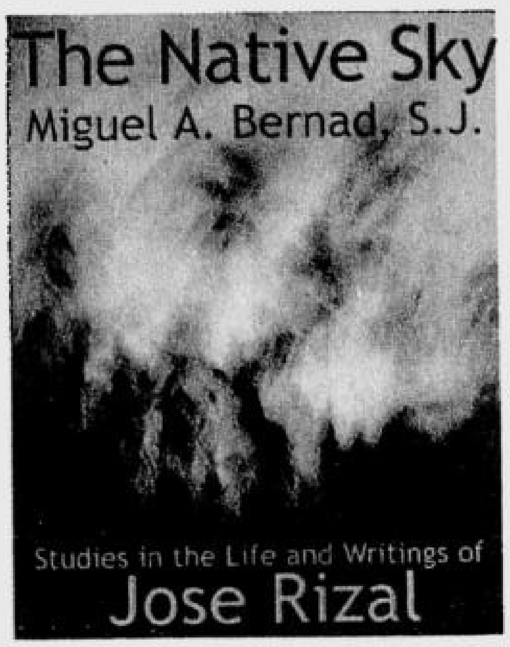
Summing up the true essence of the collection is the last essay on Rizal going down the roads of bliss to perdition in "From Calamba Garden to Dapitan Farm and the Prison Cell," Fr. Bernad's lecture when he received the Ateneo's School of Humanities Award in 2001.

Speaking of Rizal as the quintessential humanist who sought "to find harmony rather than conflict between science and art, between literature and technology," the essay succinctly reveals insights into the balanced outlook Rizal had about life, his people and the Spanish colonial government.

The well-documented and well-written essays are vintage Bernad, shifting from one era to another in Rizal's life, making us value Rizal more today.

The book should prove instructive to students who recite from memory the "Mi Ultimo Adios." Fr. Bernad tells how the poem's original manuscript was discovered, spirited out of the country and finally brought back to the Philippines.

Noteworthy too are Fr. Bernad's comparisons of the translations by Bray, Derbyshire, and Joaquin of "Mi Ultimo Adios" and his repetitions of favorite lines from Rizal's "Las Flores de Heidelberg" (*Que aroma es alma: y no abandonada/el cielo cuya luz viera en su nacer/ni olvida...*/For fragrance is the soul, and the soul does not leave/the land the light of whose sky it saw at birth,/nor does it ever forget it). The verses, according to Fr. Bernad, paralleled Rizal's own aspirations and feelings in the light of his missing home and country during a winter's day in Germany.



Filipinos who are partial to modern poetry should find refreshing the discussions of Rizal's romantic poetry which bear influences from Spanish poets Espronceda and Gil y Carrasco, and the Latin American poets, Blest Gana and Berquer.

Rizal's "Noli Me Tangere" and "El Filibusterismo," often inaccurately said to have been transported "Minerva-like" to the country from Europe, remain, says Resil Mojares in "Origins and Rise of the Filipino Novel," as "the most important literary works by a Filipino writer, animating Filipino consciousness to this day, setting standards no Filipino writer can ignore."

The novels are realistic and historical. Fr. Bernad reminds us that Rizal is speaking in the parenthetical, "Rizal says," which emphasizes the conscious aspect of creative writing.

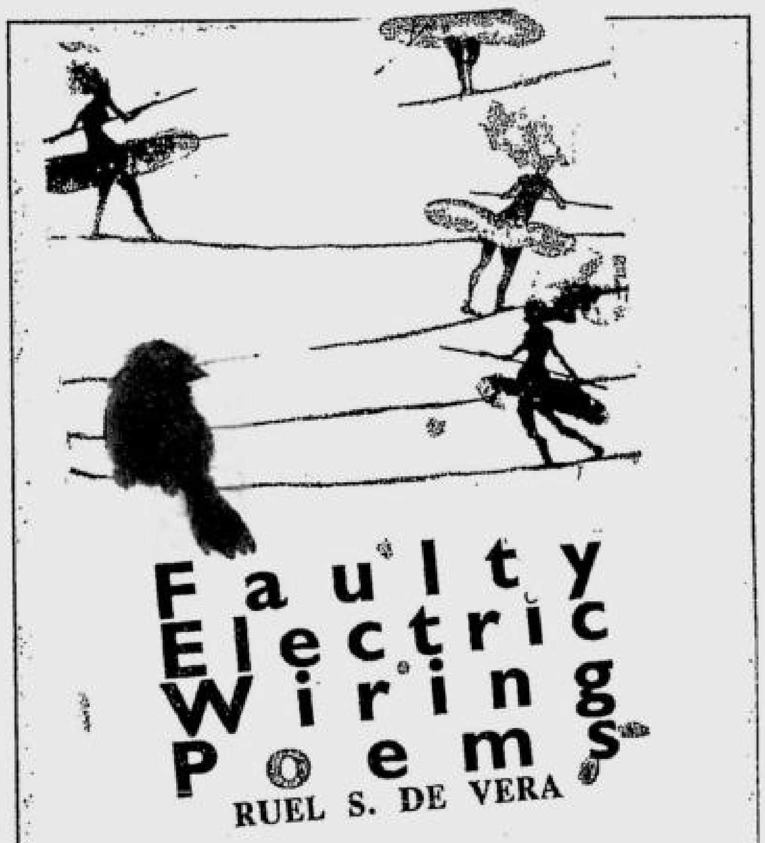
Fr. Bernad fuels our speculation on Rizal's writing habits by debunking Retana's claim that Rizal wrote the "Mi Ultimo Adios" a day before his execution. Fr. Bernad flatly states, and we agree, that the poem, "a highly polished, highly complex composition, rich with internal rhymes and assonances, rich in imagery" could not possibly be written in a day!

Fr. Bernad titillates with the information that Rizal was capable of writing a third novel, this time in Tagalog, against suggestions that Rizal failed to write one because he could not handle it. Certainly, Fr. Bernad is the better judge when he asserts that Rizal knew his native language well enough to write a novel in it.

But there may be basis for the suggestion. Rizal did not finish it. While in Hong Kong with his family in 1891 and as quoted by Mojares from a biography of Rizal by Leon Ma. Guerrero, Rizal had written: "I am finding it very difficult to write the book because I cannot express many of my thoughts freely without introducing neologisms; furthermore I have not had much experience writing in Tagalog."

This of course comes from a poet who spoke and wrote in many languages and after writing the "Noli" in Spanish instead of in French as he had originally planned.

Filipinos must read this book to help them understand Rizal's desire to do good, which sustained him throughout his brief life. His example may be pitted against the current tendency towards specialization and the vogue for "packaging."



De Vera launches new poetry book

AWARD-WINNING poet and journalist Ruel S. De Vera's new book, "Faulty Electric Wiring: Poems," will be launched on March 11 at the Ateneo de Manila University's Department of Communication at 6 p.m.

De Vera, the author and editor of seven books including his first collection of poems, 1996's "The Most Careful of Stars: Poems," presents his latest lyrical reflections of young adulthood and doomed romance in the 30 poems that make up "Faulty Electric Wiring."

It is published by the Ateneo Office of Research and Publications. De Vera is the poetry editor of the Sunday Inquirer Magazine and teaches journalism at the Ateneo. His writing has received the Catholic Mass Media Award, the Don Carlos Palanca Memorial Award for Literature and the Philippines Free Press Literary Award.

Book on male Filipino writers to be launched

"SARILAYSAY," a serious study and interviews on contemporary male Filipino writers, will be launched on March 10, 3 p.m., at the Pulungang Claro M. Recto, Bulwagang Rizal, UP Diliman, Quezon City.

The book is published by the UP Press.

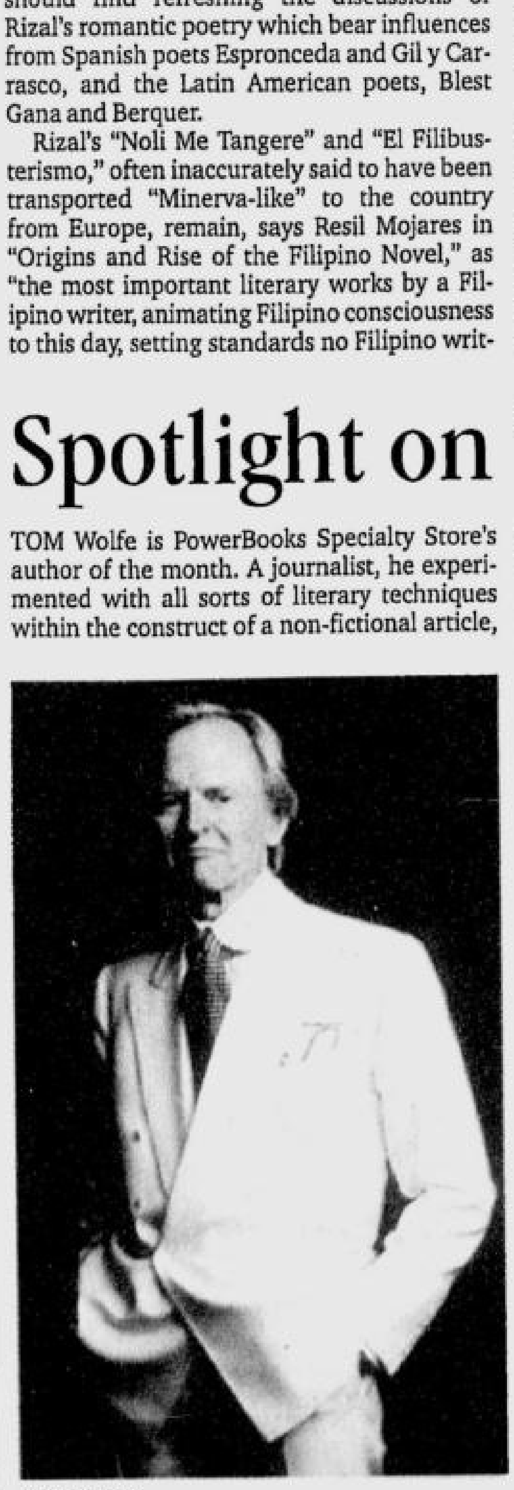
Scholars Dr. Rosario Torres-Yu and Alwin C. Aguirre conducted the lengthy one-on-one talks with writers like Ricky Lee, Jose F. Lacaba, Bienvenido Lumbera, Vim Nadera, Romulo P. Baquiran Jr. and Roland B. Tolentino. A series of perceptive essays introduce each of the five chronologically arranged sections.

The book is a helpful aid for Philippine literature teachers and students for it offers an informative look into the private worlds of renowned Filipino male dramatists, fictionists and poets.

Call 9290113.

Spotlight on Tom Wolfe

TOM Wolfe is PowerBooks Specialty Store's author of the month. A journalist, he experimented with all sorts of literary techniques within the construct of a non-fictional article, and his style became known as New Journalism.


TOM Wolfe

His books—"The Kandy-Kolored Tangerine-Flake Streamline Baby" and "The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test"—were celebrated in the 1960s.

In the 1970s, Wolfe published works like "The Painted World," a controversial book about the American art world, and "The Right Stuff," an account of the early space program and the pilots who became America's first astronauts, which won the American Book Award for non-fiction.

Wolfe's first novel, "The Bonfire of Vanities," a story about the money-feverish 1980s in New York, published in 1987, was one of the biggest books of the 1980s. In 1989, he outraged the literary community with an article in Harper's Magazine criticizing modern American novelists for failing to fully engage with their subjects. He believed that the only thing that could save modern literature was a greater reliance of journalistic technique, in which the novelist becomes the reporter–as he had done in writing "Bonfire."

Wolfe continues to create waves in the literary community with his latest novel, "I Am Charlotte Simmons," which talks about sexual promiscuity on contemporary college campuses.

PowerBooks is at Greenbelt 4 (7576428/29), Megamall (6352898 to 99), Alabang (8505662 to 63) and Glorietta (7527075).

Mag:Net toasts book on convent education

IN CELEBRATION of Women's Month, Anvil Publishing Inc. has released "Behind the Walls," edited by Cecilia Manguerra Brainard and Marily Ysip Orosa. The book was recently launched at Magnet Plus, Paseo de Roxas, Makati City.

The book features 30 essays by graduates of Catholic convent schools nationwide. The articles explain the mystique of Catholic education and relives the joys and pains of convent education.

Manguerra Brainard attended St. Theresa's College in Cebu and Manila, and in Maryknoll in Quezon City. Ysip Orosa was educated in St. Scolastica's College, St. Theresa's College in Quezon City and Maryknoll.

Rep Children's Theater audition

REPERTORY Philippines is holding auditions for its upcoming production of "The Emperor's New Clothes" on March 9 at 7 p.m. at the REP office in Karrivin Plaza, 2316 Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati City.

Open to all amateur and professional actors, 16 years old and above, the auditions will be presided over by Repertory Children's Theater (RCT) artistic director Joy Virata. Interested parties should bring a resume, recent 2x2 photo, and a piano score from any Broadway or West End musical. They should also be fluent in English and be willing to perform daily from August until December 2005.

Registration for the auditions will start at 5 p.m. Rehearsals are scheduled to start in June.

News exec talks about helicopter crash in Metro mag

NEWSPAPER executive Dennis Valdes talks about surviving a helicopter crash in India and the valuable insights he has drawn from the experience. "It just reminded me how little time we have on this earth, and thus how I need to get going to achieve what I've set out to do," he tells Metro's March 2005 issue.

Another high-powered executive featured is Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corp.'s Warner Manning, who has a unique, personalized approach toward his company's corporate social responsibility program, such as this month's "Treeathlon," a fundraiser for La Mesa Dam.

Cover girl Anne Curtis talks about her ascent from child actress to sexy grownup. Another teenager who bares her soul is 19-year-old Sasha Elizalde, who talks about her normal life as a college student and working heiress at Manila Broadcasting Corporation, which his father, Fred Elizalde, owns. "I'm very shy, especially if you do not know me. Okay, a snob. Once you get to know me, I have good traits to show to people. I have a 'person' inside," she tells Metro.

Finally, women readers—in their 20s, 30s and 40s—will delight in reading about 11 ways to look good in white this summer. There are also tips on how best to shape the eyebrow to look younger and prettier.

Metro March is now available in newsstands. Call 4152272 local 4656.

National Artist launches two books

NATIONAL Artist for Literature Virgilio S. Almario, better known as Rio Alma, will launch two new books published by the University of the Philippines Press on March 9, 4 p.m., at the Pulungang C.M. Recto, Bulwagang Rizal, UP Diliman. March 9 also happens to be the author's birthday.

"Memo Mulang Gimokudan: Aklat ng Tulang Tuluyan" is Rio Alma's first book to be published since he was named National Artist for Literature in 2003. The book is a collection of prose poetry ("tulang tuluyan"), a form that seeks to liberate itself from the strict architecture of verse, and draws from the works of Charles Baudelaire, Louis Bertrand, Filipino revolutionary Emilio Jacinto, and contemporary Filipino poet Mike Bigornia.

"Pablo Neruda: Mga Piling Tula" celebrates the birth centenary of the Latin American Nobel laureate through a collection of Filipino translations of his poems. The book is edited by Almario and Romulo P. Baquiran Jr., who received the 2003 National Book Award for Poetry for his book "Onyx." Among the many distinguished Filipino poets who contributed translations of their favorite Neruda poems are Bienvenido Lumbera, Fidel Rillo, Ma. Josefina T. Barrios, Vim Nadera, Lilia Quindoza Santiago and Rene Villanueva.

"Memo" costs P400 and "Pablo Neruda" costs P320. Both books will be sold at a discount during the launch. They are also available at the UP Press Bookstore in UP Diliman and will soon be available at the National Book Store, Power-Books, Solidaridad, and other bookstores.

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[1] Walzem, R.L., C.J. Dillard, and J.B. German. Crit. Rev. Food Sci & Nutr. 42:353, 2002

[2] Hexter A. Cancer Res 1994:54(5):1969-1975

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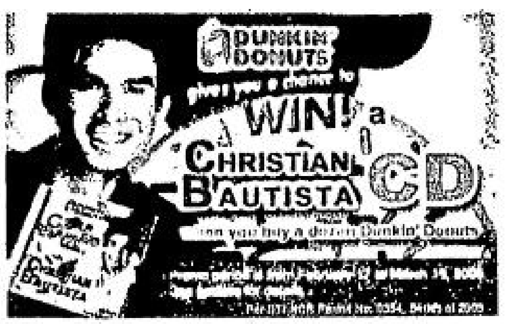

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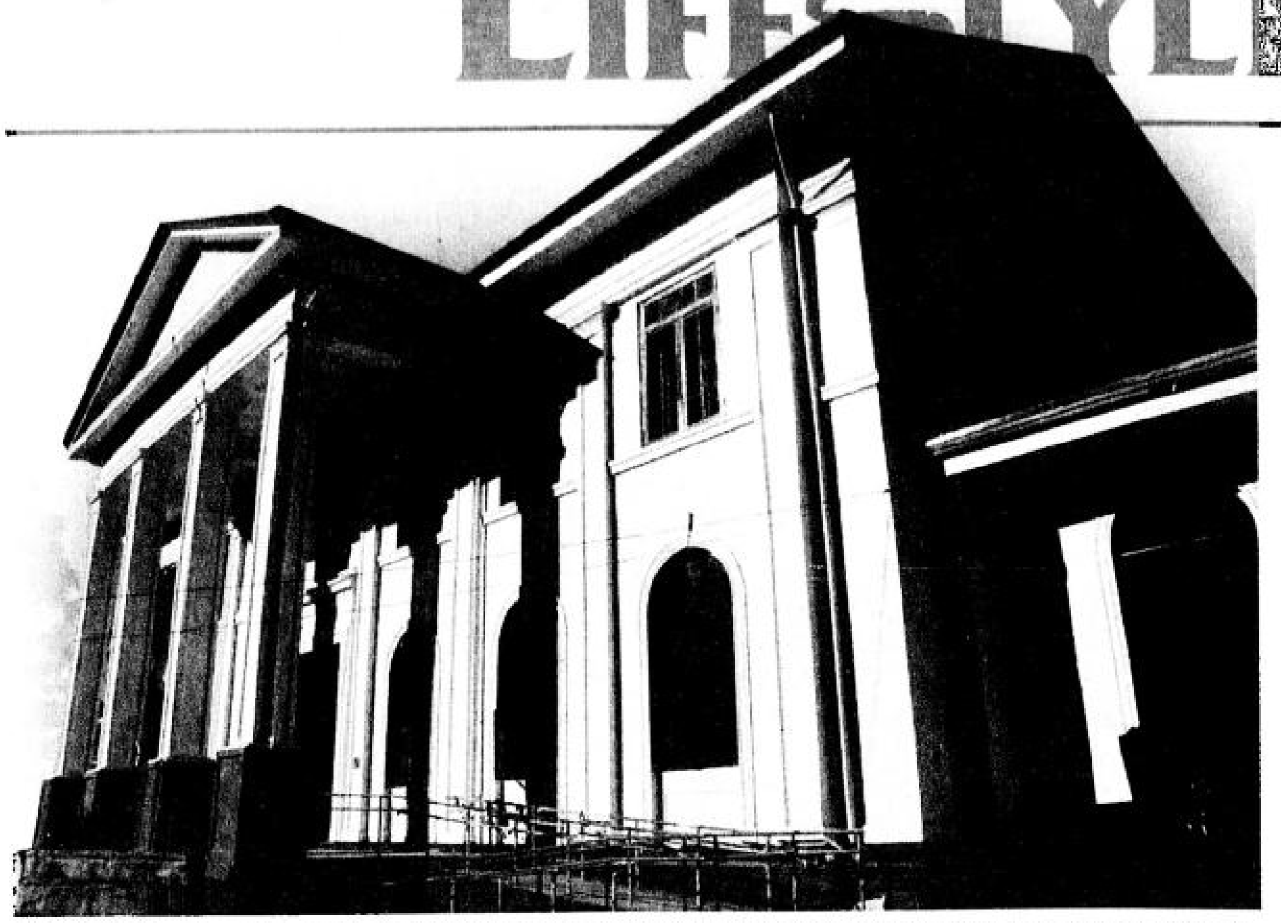

THE NEWLY restored Baguio Central School is repainted in the green-and-white color scheme that is the vanished hallmark of old Baguio architecture.

Baguio school renovated

PRIDE OF PLACE

Augusto F. Villalon

ON MARCH 12, President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone will inaugurate the restored Baguio Central School, the second heritage schoolhouse to be restored by the Heritage Conservation Society (HCS) for the Heritage Schoolhouse Program of the Department of Education.

Baguio Central School has quite a history. Organized during the early American colonial era by a teacher from the American military, the school originally had 25 students holding classes in one room of the house of Ibaloi herdsman Mateo Cariño, one of the founding fathers of Baguio.

The school moved in 1901 to another house where the present market now stands. It expanded into an industrial school where American teachers taught livelihood trades like blacksmithing. The school moved once again. This time it boasted of a two-classroom building, a dormitory and a mess hall-kitchen building on a small campus that had a natural swimming hole as centerpiece.

The present school built in 1923 shares a hill with the City Hall overlooking historic Burnham Park. Strategically located, Baguio Central School has one of the best views of Baguio.

Originally fitted out with 11 classrooms, the two-story building was originally constructed of concrete and Baguio pine. Its simple architecture echoed that of its neighbor, the Baguio City Hall, including the two-story colonnade at the center of each building serving as its main entrance.

Destroyed by American bombing in 1945, the building was rebuilt in 1949 and although it has been in use since then, it fell victim to the usual poor maintenance that most government buildings suffer from.

There were many surprises during the restoration process. Beneath hideous linoleum floor covering were the original wide floorboards of thick Benguet pine supported by solid pine floor joists, wood no longer available these days and worth a fortune.

Interior partitions and tall wooden doors turned out to be handcrafted out of Benguet pine as well, hidden from view by thick layers of paint.

The most interesting discovery was that the exterior walls of the second floor were also of pine planks, covered over with concrete in later years. Due to the deteriorated condition of most of the wall planks, they could no longer be restored.

The restored school recaptures its historic ambiance while being fitted out with modern requirements such as glass panels to make classrooms visible from the corridors, Internet-ready wiring and an upgraded auditorium for small presentations. The basement was dug out to provide four additional classrooms.

The restored school is painted in the green-and-white color scheme associated with Baguio homes dating from the city's historic days as the American colonial Hill Station that was once the Philippines' summer capi-

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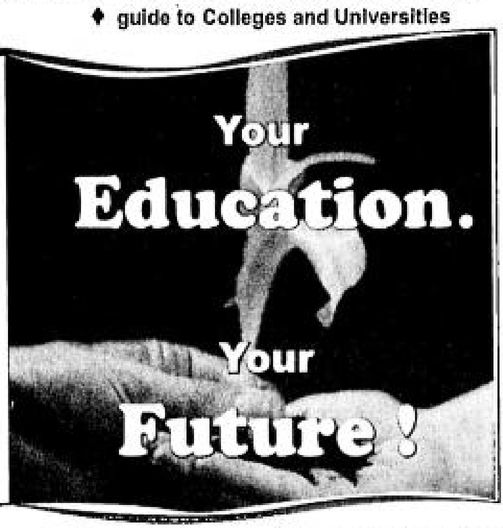

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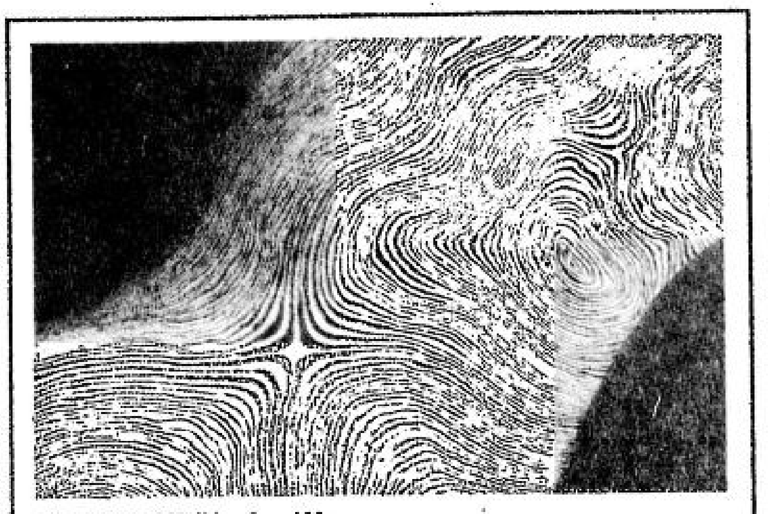


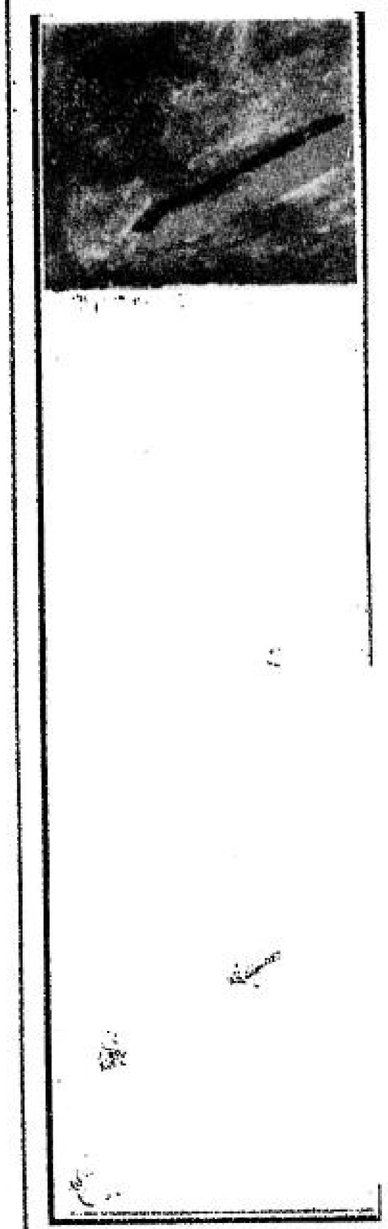
"DAMASCUS," by Armi Yam

Women take art to heart in Heart Center show

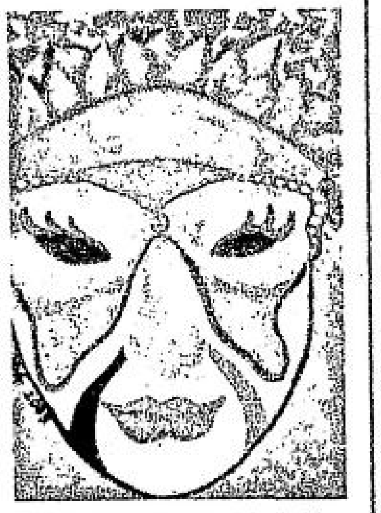
THE PHILIPPINE Heart Center presents "Heartly Women" today until March 26 at the lobby of PHC's Medical Arts Building, East Avenue, QC.

Participating artists include Susan Aquilino, Rona Aumentado, Honey Banal, Ida Ching, Joy Chua, Heart Co, Eunice de Guzman, Melinda Dumaual, Armida Francisco, Vivian Go, Peachie Gonzaga, Kaiseria, Clarisa Navidad, Dyna Undoy, Merly Ong, Arabelle Pua, Eunice Roxas, Aed Solis, Tina Tibang, Alane Ty, Armi Yam and Zsa Zsa Yu.

The artists—members of Sining, Kulay at Tinta Art Group—celebrate womanhood with various works in acrylic, oil, pastel and watercolor. Call Pol Mesina Jr. at 6502941 or Honey Banal, 9417633/ 0920-9217284.



"DRAWING at Crayola," by Honey Banal



"MASKARA IV," by Ida Robles-Ching

Reliving the old haunts

By Gino Dormiendo
Contributor

THERE is an air of overarching nostalgia in this show by four noted artists from Bulacan. "Vanishing Scenes" (at Renaissance Art Gallery, Art Walk, SM Megamall, until March 17) shows scenes slowly disappearing from view: ancestral houses, antiquarian buildings and centuries-old churches.

Four artists have taken it upon themselves to do their share in the task of cultural preservation. Al Perez, the most senior of the four, comes from Hagonoy and his name is synonymous with the subject of churches. He has painted practically all of the major sites of worship in the country, traveling to the remotest places and documenting his subject with brush and paint.

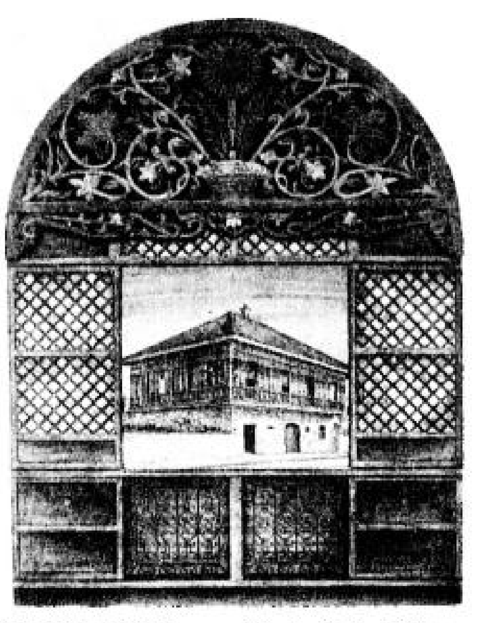
His works have been documented in this year's calendar of the Manila Cathedral, which comes with annotation of various churches and how they have withstood the test of time.

Perez has an unerring eye for capturing the solid character of churches, not simply architectural or physical, but also aesthetic.

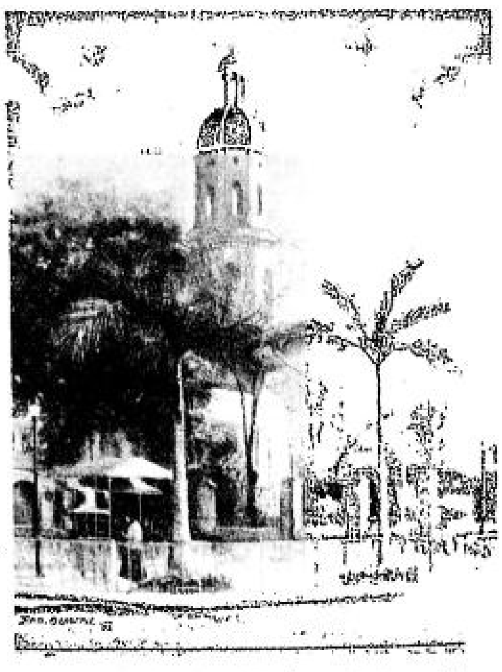
Danny Pangan, who hails from San Rafael, but has lived in Apalit, Pampanga, for many years, is a hyper-realist who has long specialized in three-dimensional paintings, evident in the manner in which he depicts the indoors of manors in relation to the outdoors. His trademark is the highly elaborate rendering of latticework that was popular in the interiors of the homes of the affluent ilustrado folk. Combining paint with real wood that he himself designs, Pangan conveys the impeccable turn-of-the-century manners and morals, as well as the artistic and cultural upbringing of people at that time as reflected in their well-appointed homes.

Cris Velasco, from Baliaug, was once an abstract artist who turned realist when he became enamored with the subject of old houses. Unlike Pangan, however, Velasco focuses on the detail of the façade of stately mansions. Eschewing the view taken by Pangan, he prefers to work on windows and balconies, and applies miniature latticework that he himself designs and executes. The work throbs with the textures that he works on to achieve the patina of age.

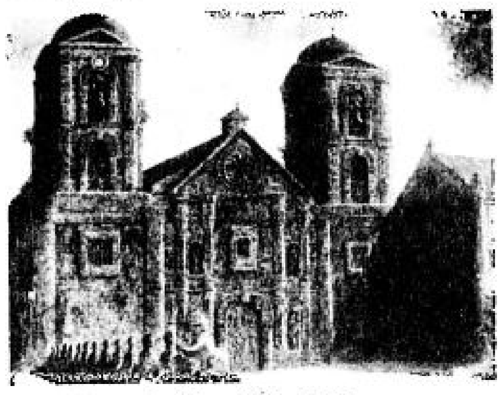
Ernie Velasquez takes a more encompassing view of the town as seen in its plaza, with the church in the background and the beehive of activity that now dominates these places, from ambulant vendors to food kiosks. A graduate of the University of Santo Tomas College of Fine Arts, major in painting, Velasquez is less concerned with structural grandeur than with the landscape around it. The scenes he chooses to paint have a life of their own, and the feeling they evoke in the viewer transcends mere nostalgia. It is the artist's own tribute to our people's zest for life.



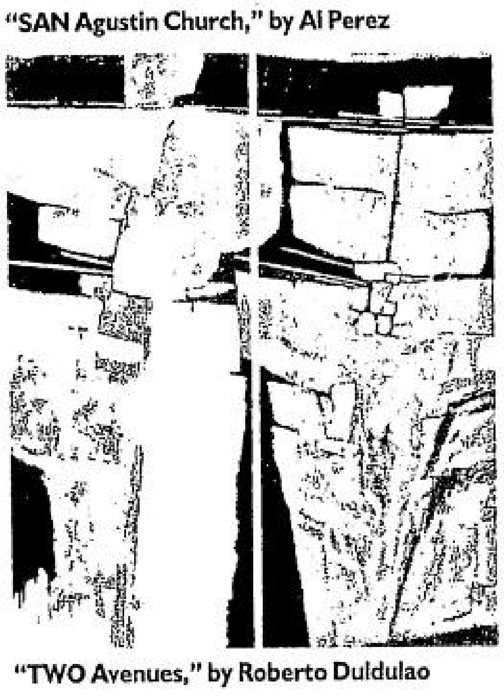
"ANCESTRAL Home of Dr. José Rizal," by Danny Pangan



"SAN Agustin Church Baliuag, Bulacan," by Ernie Velasquez



"SAN Agustin Church," by Al Perez



"TWO Avenues," by Roberto Duldulao

Debuting Duldulao

The works of Roberto Duldulao are themselves a throwback to the golden age of abstract impressionism. Having come of age in the late 1960s, he was more than just a witness to the First Quarter Storm and the subsequent Martial Law years.

Duldulao was a student at the University of Santo Tomas and later at the state university, where he was a working student, doing illustrations for magazines and other publications of pre-martial law era.

"Images by the Bay" at the Heritage Art Center (Art Walk, SM Megamall, until March 17) belatedly pays tribute to the flowering of abstract art when the late Jose Joya, now National Artist, was among the leading lights. Duldulao was then in good company, mentored no less than by Joya himself, and the founding founders of the New York School, particularly Franz Kline, Willem de Kooning and Robert Motherwell.

And he had a buyer in the person of Fernando Zobel, who readily bought his work and later donated it to the Ateneo de Manila Art Gallery.

Now 60, Duldulao has retained a great deal of the abstractionist's energy and bravado, as his friend Edwin Wilwayco writes in his introduction to the artist, with their "blustery-windswept quality brought about by a cascade of slashings, scratches, random scrawls and screes"—the images evoke the aerial view of the city, particularly that of Roxas Boulevard and Manila Bay, where land and sea intertwine in a final fadeaway from the sky.

The suite of acrylic paintings is particularly distinctive in its evocation of a particular time and site when colors coalesce and collide in well-orchestrated performances. Indeed, the images, as culled from memory, triggered by the artist's frequent jaunts, now reverberate with even greater subliminal force, in a show that has taken a lifetime to finally put together.

Ebulliently joyful and spiritually serene

By Stephanie Francisco
Contributor

RAUL Lebajo's "Fortune Plants and Other Paintings" (at Galerie Joaquin in San Juan) and Carlo Magno's "Abounding Prosperity," (at The Gallery, Prestige Cars BMW) are welcome bursts of fresh air.

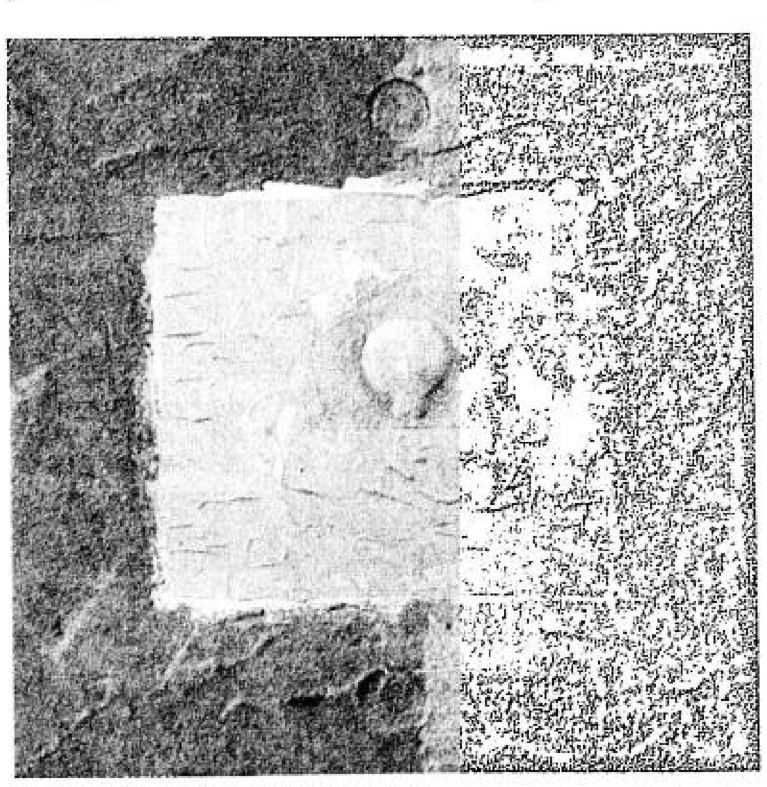
Both shows have an unmistakable sense of optimism. Also noticeable is the pure sincerity of the artists as they tackle diverse subjects and concepts. Common, too, are the highly skilled and adept executions of the paintings in their chosen media—Lebajo's in oil on canvas and Magno's in mixed media.

Lebajo's representational works are executed in celebratory colors, singing with joy and bringing happy upbeat thoughts to the viewers.

Magno's abstractions are spiritual and introspective. They speak almost in silent, ancient tongues. If they sing, they sing in whispered canticles, providing the viewer stimuli for provocative, intuitive thought.

This year, Lebajo turns 65 after a much-celebrated battle with a lung problem. He has had an illustrious 40-year career, which started with the highly imaginative abstract art pieces for his first nine shows with the Luz Gallery. Twenty years ago, he shifted to surrealism.

Although one does not find macabre floating bodies, distended torsos, bogeymen and other surrealist fare in the show, the Lebajo surrealist mischief pierces through the 20 works.



"GOLDEN Grandeur," by Carlo Magno

"Ginseng" is erotic, reminding one of a lover's tight embrace. "Green" has Lebajo's red-orange vase overcrowded with green gleeful plants. There is an ear growing on one side of the vase.

In "Full," Lebajo maximizes the composition. It shows a white plant growing from the ear-cum-handle.

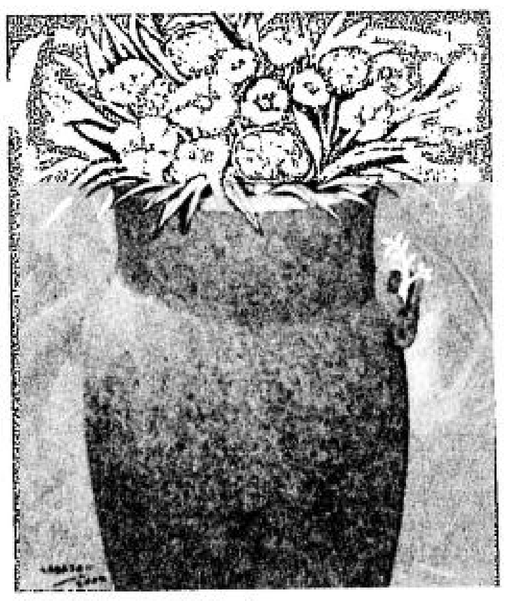
"Hanging Garden" has the hooks hanging from the ground instead of above. Meanwhile, stubble-like roots grow on the surface of the teacup in "Red."

Richness

Magno's concerns are most certainly non-representational. His art speaks of the richness of ancient cultures, evokes civilizations of times gone by, suggests images of metals, sand, stone, gold and copper. Yet, with their abstract rendition, they are transformed into contemporary jewels perfect for today's modern homes and condos.

"Ancient Richness" is a play on earth tones, copper, manganese and metallic colors. "Imperial Courtyard," "Imperial Palace," "The Summer Palace" and three other paintings are developed with predominantly royal Mandarin colors.

"Golden Harmony" is in metallic rust, at once modern and timeless. Most of the works are 48" x 48" although in this show Magno introduced the smaller 24" x 24" in noteworthy works such as "Precious Metal," "Golden Grandeur," "Hope of Glory" and "Sand, Stone and Metal."



"FULL," by Raul Lebajo

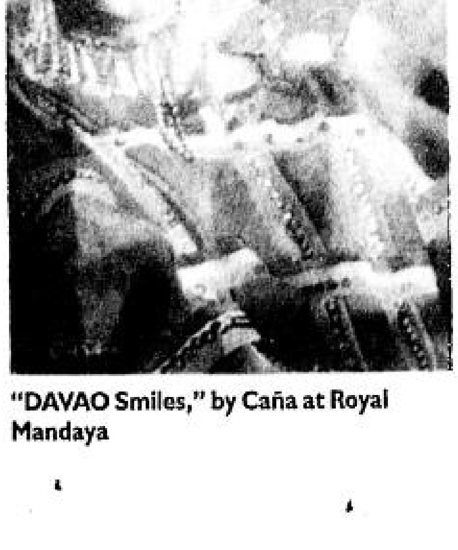
Although Magno's works are artistic anthropological testaments, they evoke a strong sense of spirituality. One will notice almost biblical or praise messages in most of their second titles. The "Imperial" paintings are subtitled "Glorious Kingdom" while the other paintings are about peace, harmony and tranquility.

Galerie Joaquin is at 371 P. Guevarra St. (tel. 7239253). The Gallery of Prestige Cars BMW is at 2324 Pasong Tamo Extension, Makati.

E-mail the author at stephiefrancisco@yahoo.com

Saturday Group in Davao, Garibay at West, Farol at Avellana

VISUAL ARTS



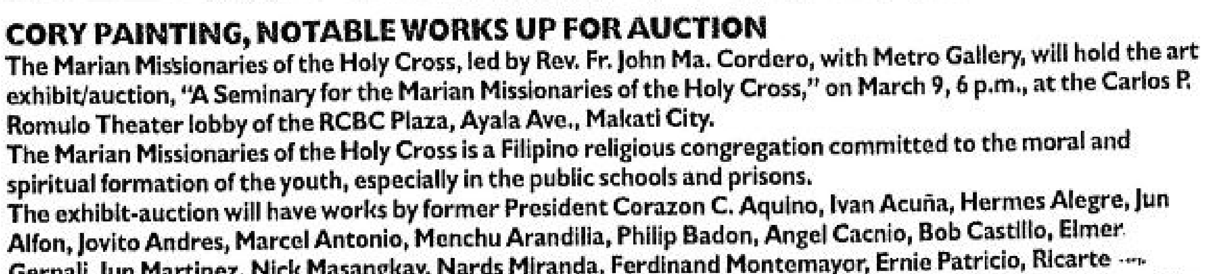
"DAVAO Smiles," by Caña at Royal Mandaya

IN CELEBRATION of Davao Day, the Saturday Group of Artists will hold an art exhibit on March 15-31 at the Royal Mandaya Hotel of Glen Escador with some assistance from Cebu Pacific. Part of the proceeds will be donated to Diego Silang Elementary School. Ophie Dee of Gallery 828 will curate the show.

AVELLANA Gallery presents Noell Farol's recent works, "Glassbound," until March 21 at 2680 F.B. Harrison St., Pasay City. The artist uses convex lenses with engraved delicate natural elements and Petri dishes that store and display biological or scientific remains. Call 8338357.

THE WORKS of abstract painter Doltz Pilar will be featured in the one-day exhibit, "Solo 05," on March 9 at The Edge, (One McKinley Place, The Fort, Taguig). Pilar uses acrylic to create dipthyc and tripthyc sculptural paintings in bold color combinations that capture different emotional states in a three-dimensional patchwork effect. The exhibit is a fundraiser for Sentro Kalinga, a mother and

SATURDAY/ D4



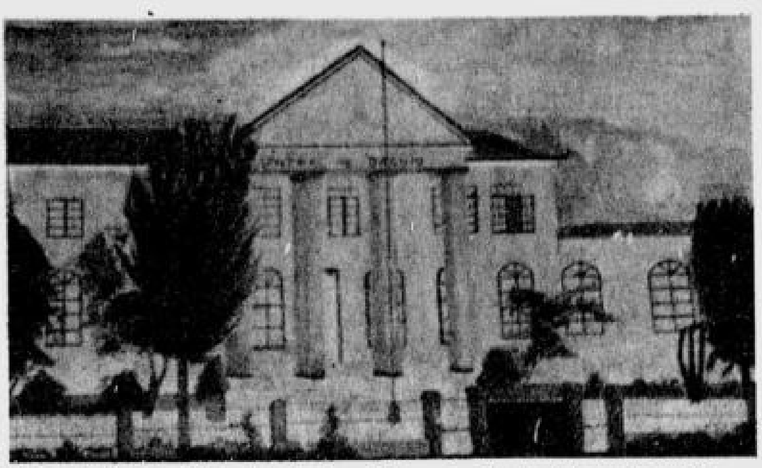
CORY PAINTING, NOTABLE WORKS UP FOR AUCTION

The Marian Missionaries of the Holy Cross, led by Rev. Fr. John Ma. Cordero, with Metro Gallery, will hold the art exhibit/auction, "A Seminary for the Marian Missionaries of the Holy Cross," on March 9, 6 p.m., at the Carlos P. Romulo Theater lobby of the RCBC Plaza, Ayala Ave., Makati City.

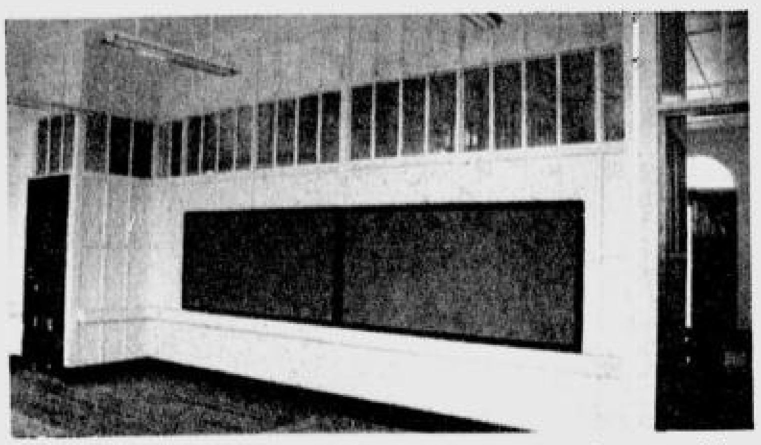
The Marian Missionaries of the Holy Cross is a Filipino religious congregation committed to the moral and spiritual formation of the youth, especially in the public schools and prisons.

The exhibit-auction will have works by former President Corazon C. Aquino, Ivan Acuña, Hermes Alegre, Jun Alfon, Jovito Andres, Marcel Antonio, Menchu Arandilia, Philip Badon, Angel Cacnio, Bob Castillo, Elmer Gernali, Jun Martinez, Nick Masangkay, Nards Miranda, Ferdinand Montemayor, Ernie Patricio, Ricarte Puruganan, Ton Raymundo, Al Perez, Loreto Racuya, and William Yu. Proceeds will go to the construction of the new MMHC House of Formation and youth pastoral center in Marikina City.

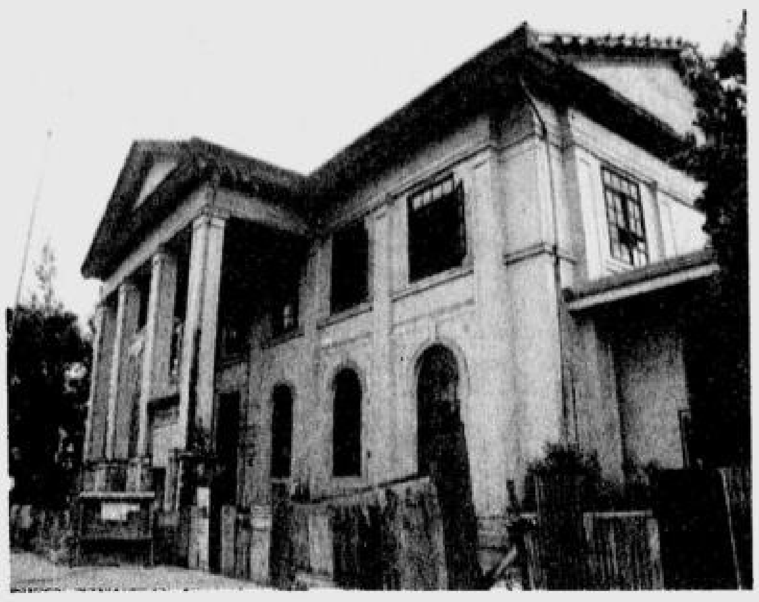
Call 9420533. Also call Maia Melencio of Buensalido & Associates at 8174471, 8923520.



A PAINTING left hanging in the old Baguio Central shows how the building originally looked.



THE ORIGINAL Benguet pine floorboards are exposed once again in this restored classroom.



THE BUILDING façade before restoration

Baguio school renovated

From page D1

tal.

There are many similarities between Baguio Central School and José Rizal Elementary School in Bacolod City, the 1907 structure restored last year.

Both schools were brought back to their original configuration and design. Both were also fitted out with the latest teaching aids and equipment.

Jose Rizal outfitted

At José Rizal, the building's ground floor was fitted out with administrative offices plus additional classrooms, a music room and a state-of-the-art computer room. On its second floor is a large library whose wood louvered windows shutter out glaring sunlight. A second set of *capiz* windows and floor-level *ventanillas* slide open to admit tropical breezes cooled by century-old acacia trees outside the structure.

School principals from Negros Occidental province who attended the inauguration of the restored structure were amazed at the environment-friendliness of the 1907 building, the coolness of its interior spaces, and its continued appropriateness for modern classroom use.

Rizal Elementary School is a learning experience and an example of living heritage. It provides a working example of heritage architecture. It proves that the educational system and the DepEd have been in continuous service in the province and throughout the country since the early 1900s. History lives, relevant to modern living as the restored schoolhouse demonstrates.

Restored schoolhouses from the 1907-1940 period are testimony to a key American contribution to the Philippines, the establishment of a nationally-coordinated education system available to all Filipinos.

Old schoolhouses, many in disrepair or abandoned, are an unrealized source of additional classrooms severely needed by the public school system. In response to that lack, the main thrust of the Heritage Schoolhouse Program is to restore historic schoolhouses for reuse as modern educational facilities.

The José Rizal school shows the success of the program in introducing the value of heritage and its relevance to modern living. From advance reports received, school administration and teachers are enthusiastic to begin holding classes in the restored Baguio Central School.

Youth awareness is vital for the preservation of heritage. Therefore the HCS always involves student apprentices and provides hands-on experiential learning in the different aspects of conservation. Some universities, the UP College of Architecture for example, give academic credit for the apprenticeship. Students volunteer their services but travel and lodging costs are shouldered by the HCS.

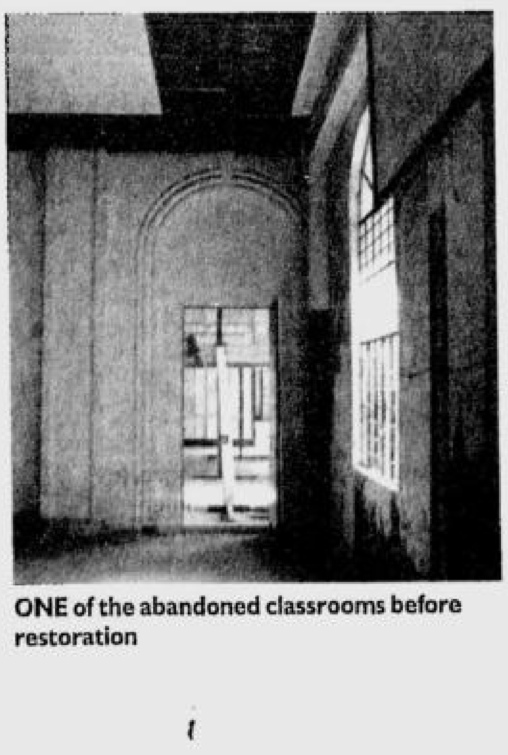
HCS members who are qualified conservation practitioners volunteer to lead multi-disciplinary teams of students to carry out preliminary field research before restoration.

Since conservation goes beyond the architectural aspect, history students research on the individual buildings, environmental planners look at the urban context of heritage structures, and students of economics, tourism, humanities and the other disciplines also take part in the research.

Technical conservation requirements required for construction—architectural and conservation planning, engineering services—are contracted from professional conservation specialists.

Heritage Watch: Taal

Heritage vigilantes are invited to be present at the hearing of the People of Taal (Batangas), Charm (the Taal heritage NGO) versus the Taal Parish for the illegal construction of an adoration chapel that defaces the heritage setting of the Taal Basilica, one of the historic structures protected by the National Historic Institute.



ONE of the abandoned classrooms before restoration

The hearing is tomorrow at the Regional Trial Court of Taal. Those interested may call Dorie Soriano of HCS at 5212239 or 5222497.

E-mail feedback to afvillalon@hotmail.com

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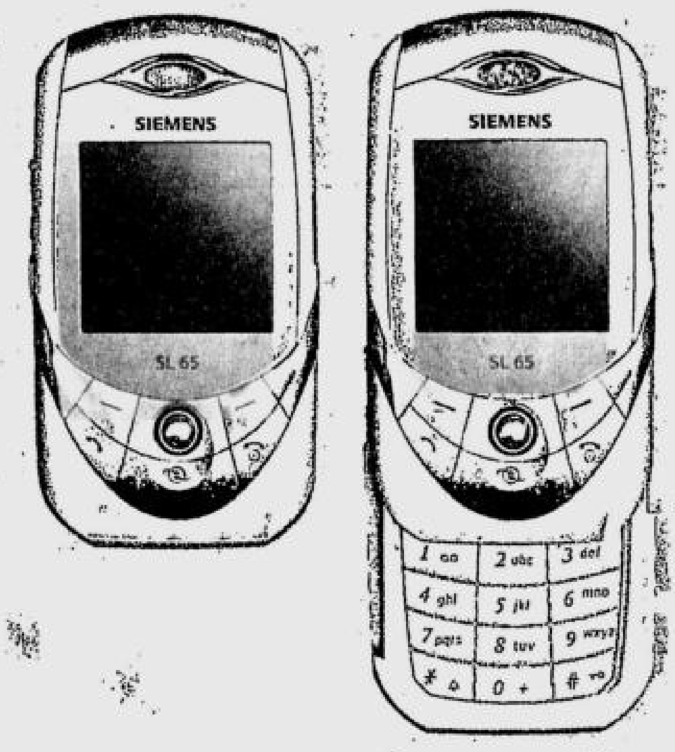

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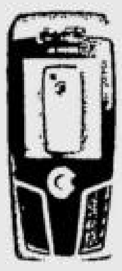

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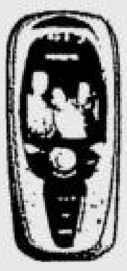

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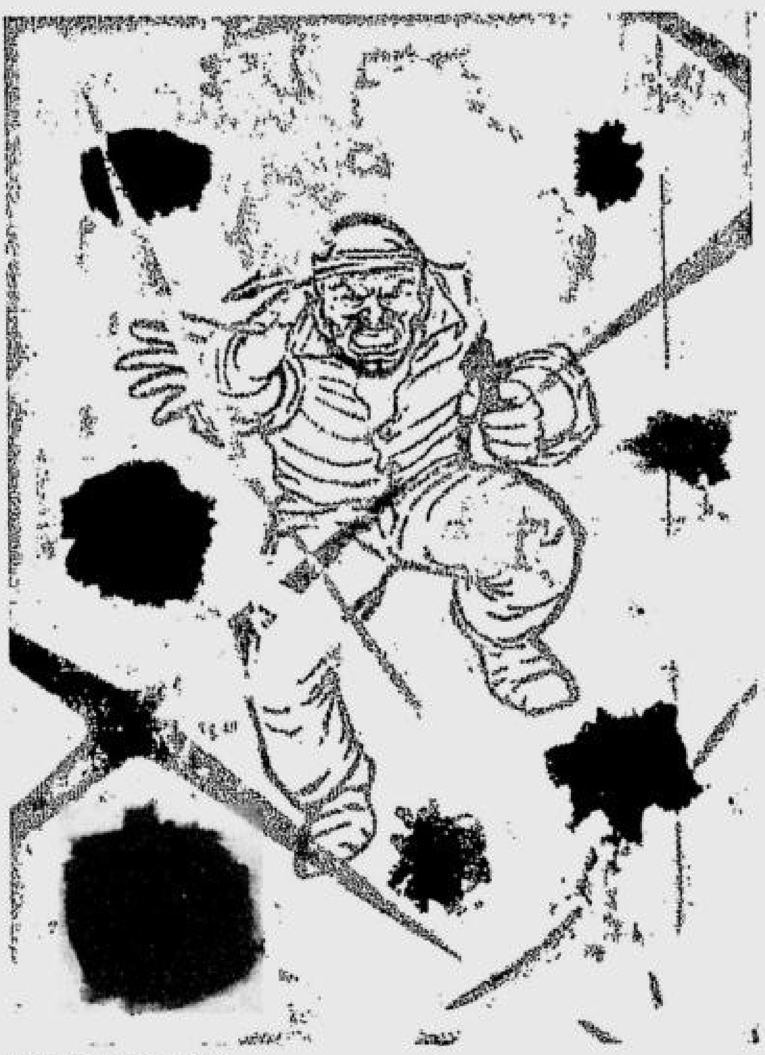
Vandalism as art

By Constantino C. Tejero



"ATTACK Painter"

ONE of our more interesting though lesser known young artists is Jayson Oliveria. Working on and exhibiting his art relatively quietly, this young man nevertheless stands on his artistic skill and the strength of his conviction.

We've watched his development for some years now, and we'd say it doesn't fail to take us by surprise. He seems to grow by leaps and bounds, and his every exhibit is different from the last.

A Fine Arts graduate from University of the Philippines, Oliveria, naturally, has been nurtured by, and is attracted to, the workings of the avant-garde.

Consider "Attack Painter," eight pieces in mixed media and oil on canvas, until March 12 in The Drawing Room, Metrostar Building, 1007 Metropolitan Ave., Makati City.

The exhibit is a mix of graphic illustrations and geometric abstraction. The style may be Pop but the impulse is undoubtedly Dadaist, if not Post-Painterly.

Here Oliveria appears to be producing art in a fit of rage. Playing on a paradox, he vandalizes his own artworks, resulting in a tension between creation and destruction.

"Attack Painter," in its line-drawing illustration of a rampaging thug aiming a gun at the viewer, reminds us of Sigmar Polke's graphics appropriated from comic books and pulp fiction. But then Oliveria has sullied the pictorial field with splotches of black, white, brown, red, orange, pink, blue, green, and literally slashed the canvas.

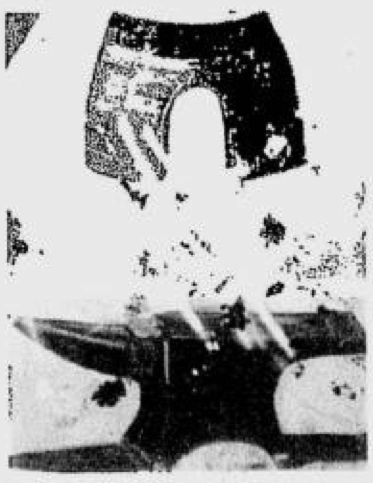
Some sort of pentimento

Indiscriminate slashing of the canvas has also been committed on "When You Brush and See Blood, Ask Your Dentist," with its black-and-white graphic outline of a paintbrush irretrievably destroyed. The viewer wonders if this is some sort of pentimento.

The notion of pentimento ("to repent," or "to regret") is reinforced in "The House for the Sake of the Mortar." Here the canvas is not only slashed but also boarded up or the slits inserted with canvas cutups presumably from another work, producing a military-camouflage motif. The visual frame is written over with the piece's title and *A fool pulled down*.

When literal slashing is not enough, the artist uses dubious color schemes and inharmonious forms, as in "A Painting for a Missing Altarpiece" and "Flies."

Their .combinations of khaki, yellow, umber, black, white, orange, pink, turquoise, ultramarine, ochre, red, yellow-green, slate-green, plus the crisscrossing lines and curves and jumble of circles, squares, rectangles, triangles, stripes, polka dots—look sickly, if not downright ugly.



"BIRD"

No image of an altarpiece is visible in the first, by the way, as it is rendered abstract. The second, a piece vaguely resembling Vieira da Silva's "Checkmate," might be an abstraction but it could also be a patchwork of images from a housefly's-eye view.

Classic notions of painting

In "Birds" (of course, there are no birds), there is some white splattering, as if the artist has wanted to obliterate with scratches and patches the finely rendered original image.

"Untitled" is a porthole view of a red brick wall against black and white, a piece conventional enough to stick out like a sore thumb in this show.

"Fear of Bad Paintings Produces Bad Paintings," showing floating bands of black, yellow, gold and cerulean against white, could be the artist's final statement. It just looks bad, that's all.

Here, then, Oliveria is intentionally making "bad" art, since he is not only trying to demolish the barrier between "high" art and "low" art (as the Pop artists do) but also attacking preconceived ideas about what a painting should be (as the Post-Painterly artists do).

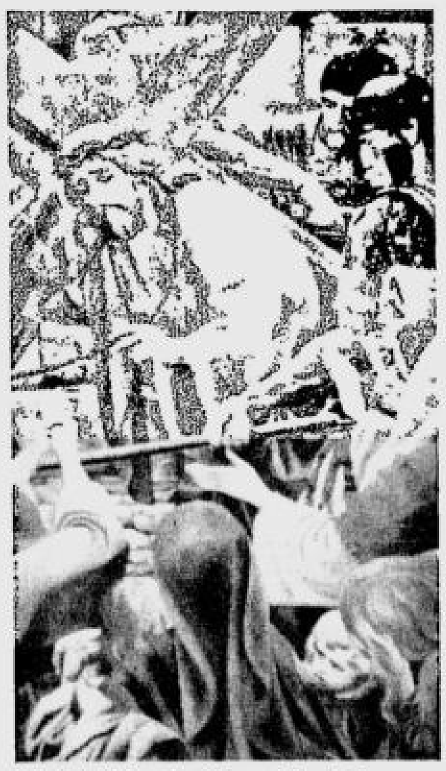
As the exhibit note says, this is Oliveria's latest turn in his study of painting as "undermining its classic notions of virtuosity and exquisiteness, thus overturning the viewers' expectations of what a masterwork should be."

A viewer coming out of such show is bound to ask: Was it a mistake?

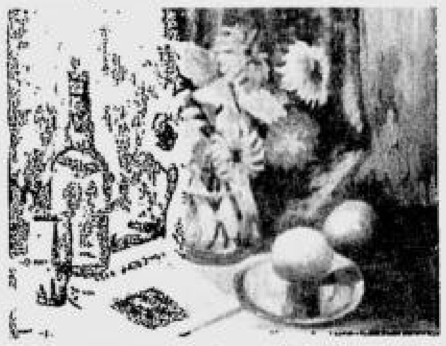
The artist may have gone too far in making a point, but the fact that he has made the supreme sacrifice of destroying that which he has created shows the courage of his conviction, mistake or no mistake.

MANUEL Baldemor presents part of the proceeds of his exhibit in Jakarta to Asean Secretary General Ong Keng Yong for the benefit of the tsunami victims. Looking on are Philippine Ambassador to Indonesia Shulan Primavera and Asean Deputy Secretary General Wilfrido V. Villacorta. Baldemor also donated his painting, "Muslim Ceremonial Dance," to the Asean Secretariat Art Gallery in Kebayoran Baru, Jakarta.

Saturday Group . . .



"EIGHTH Station (Jesus Meets the Women of Jerusalem)," by Carlos "Botong" Francisco



"STILL Life" 3, by Cesar Cruz

From page D2

child care center.

EMMANUEL Garibay shows the various perspectives and meanings one can get from viewing a set of images. On view at West Gallery in SM Megamall from March 10-22, Garibay's new exhibit represents his current world views on religion, society, history and culture. Call 6341284.

"ART Ensemble for Special Children" will be on exhibit on March 11-14 at Rockwell Power Plant Mall, Makati. The show will feature the works of Jose Joya, Oscar Zalameda, Mauro Malang Santos, Eduardo Castrillo, Tam Austria, Angel Cacnio, Ramon Orlina, Michael Cacnio, Rafael Cusi, Caloy Gabuco and Omi Reyes. The exhibit is for the benefit of Cupertino Foundation for Retarded Children.

THE CAVITE-BASED artists' collective, Anting-anting, and the Malaysian group, Matahati, present a series of interactive paintings and individual canvases until March 30 at Pinto Art Gallery (1 Sierra Madre St., Grand Heights, Antipolo City). Call 6971015.

GALERIA de las Islas mounts Cesar Cruz's "Kalikasan" until May 31 at Ilustrado Restaurant, 744 Gen. Luna St., Intramuros, Manila. The exhibit features landscape paintings. Call 5272113.

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